From Creation
to the
Patriarchs

HOURS WITH THE BIBLE

OR

THE SCRIPTURES IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN DISCOVERY AND KNOWLEDGE

BY

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VOL. I.

FROM CREATION TO THE PATRIARCHS

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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INSCRIBED

TO THE RIGHT HON. AND MOST REVEREND

ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL TAIT,

NINETY-SECOND ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND, AND METROPOLITAN, ETC., ETC., ETC.,

WITH SINCERE RESPECT.

PREFACE.

CERVANTES says of one of his characters, that he was "as kind a man as ever trod on shoe leather; mighty good to the poor;* a main friend to all honest people, and had a face like a benediction." It is because I believe all this literally true of the Archbishop of Canterbury that I inscribe this book to him; for any approach to insincerity would be alike unworthy of him and of myself. The record of his inner life in that most touching book, "Catherine and Craufurd Tait," justifies the earlier clauses, and no one who has seen him can dispute the last.

For the name I have chosen—"Hours with the Bible"—I am indebted to my old friend, the Rev. W. Calvert, Vicar of St. Peter's, Lordship Lane. He may perhaps

* By a strange chance I read to-day in the paper: "On Thursday last, the Archbishop of Canterbury entertained 600 of the poor of Lambeth to tea in the Library of the Palace. The company, including many of the blind of the neighbourhood, then assembled in the Palace grounds, where they were made glad by the bright and cheerful conversation and singing of the Archbishop's three daughters. At eight o'clock the evening hymn was sung, and his Grace gave his blessing to all present. On leaving, each visitor received a bunch of beautiful flowers."

remember how he suggested it to me, years ago, as we were walking together one summer evening, along the delightful road between his Church and West Dulwich.

My aim in this new undertaking, which involves almost more labour than "My Life and Words of Christ," has been and will be to bring all that I can gather from every available source to bear on the illustration of the Scriptures. I should like to supply what Doctor Arnold used to long for—"A people's hand-book to the Bible;" not a dry series of papers, but a pleasant, attractive illumination of its pages by the varied lights of modern research and discovery. Whether or not I have succeeded in this first volume, must be left to the reader to determine.

It is fit that I should, meanwhile, express my best thanks to Professor G. Ebers, of Leipsic, whom I need do no more than name, for kindly and valued hints; and also to my learned friend, Dr. Samuel Birch, of the British Museum, for important and right friendly help. Nor must I forget my beloved brother clergyman, the Rev. J. Aberigh Mackay, M.A., B.D., of Paris, who has taken the trouble to revise many of the proof sheets.

And now may He whose Written Word I have sought to vindicate and illustrate, own my humble efforts. And may He, in His own good time, open the way for my return to the land of Libraries, and Sabbaths, and Evangelical Religion—thrice happy England.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER

I. GENESIS.

II. ANCIENT IDEAS, SACRED AND PROFANE, OF GOD AND NATURE—A CONTRAST.

III. ANCIENT LEGENDS OF CREATION.

IV. THE BIBLE AND MODERN SCIENCE.

V. JEWISH IDEAS OF NATURE AND OF CREATION.

VI. THE AGE OF THE WORLD.

VII. ADAM AND EVE.

VIII. THE STORY OF EDEN.

IX. THE ANTIQUITY OF MAN.

X. THE ANTIQUITY AND ORIGIN OF MAN.

XI. ORIGIN OF MAN, AND HIS PRIMITIVE CONDITION, ETC.

XII. THE DESCENDANTS OF ADAM.

XIII. THE FLOOD.

XIV. THE FLOOD CONCLUDED.

XV. AFTER THE FLOOD.

XVI. THE TABLE OF NATIONS.

XVII. THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF NATIONAL HISTORY.

XVIII. THE FIRST BEGINNINGS OF THE HEBREW NATION.

XIX. THE MIGRATIONS OF ABRAHAM.

XX. THE FRIEND OF GOD.

XXI. PALESTINE AND EGYPT IN ABRAHAM'S DAYS.

XXII. ABRAHAM'S SECOND RESIDENCE IN CANAAN.

XXIII. ISAAC AND HIS SONS.

XXIV. JOSEPH.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
Map of the World by Cosmas	112
The Heavens and Earth of Cosmas	113
Egyptian Goddess and Indian God	120
Sacred Tree and Figures	121
Noah in the Ark, with Figures	196
Chart of the World—Time of the Hebrews	242
Semitic Strangers in Abraham's Time	360–61
Human Sacrifice in Egypt	395
Beersheba	397
Rachel's Sepulchre	442
Shepherd's Refuge Tower	444
The White Castle of Memphis, Joseph's Prison	461
Egyptian Baking	466

HOURS WITH THE BIBLE.

CHAPTER I.

GENESIS.

THE Hebrew Scriptures were originally grouped into three sections, the Law, the Prophets, and the remaining miscellaneous compositions; the first embracing the five Books of Moses; the second, the historical books, from Joshua to Second Kings, the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and the twelve Minor Prophets; the third including the rest of the canon.

Of these, the first five books, or The Law, were always regarded as one great whole, and hence are constantly spoken of as such by the sacred writers. But for the present we have to do only with the opening section.

The name Genesis, or the Beginning, is simply the Greek equivalent for the first word in the Hebrew Text, which, after having been from time immemorial used by the Jews as a title for the book, was adopted by the translators of the Septuagint, or Greek version of the Old Testament, begun in the third century before Christ.

Aside from its higher claims as part of divine Revelation, the extreme antiquity of Genesis gives it a surpassing value. Its composition has been assigned by

the Jews, from the earliest ages, to Moses, and modern controversy has done nothing to shake this belief, though it has shown that the great lawgiver made use, as might have been expected, of documents ancient even in his day, and has, perhaps, pointed out, here and there, minute additions of a later hand. But this also was only what must naturally have happened, for the sacred books would doubtless be annotated and revised as was needed in the course of ages, by some of "the holy men of old," in the schools of the prophets, "who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

As a whole, Genesis stands at the head of the literature of the world—the very oldest book now in existence. The earliest known writings that compete in any measure with it are those so wonderfully recovered in late years from the ruins of Assyria and the tombs of Egypt, but neither the Euphrates nor the Nile has given us anything that will compare in manifold value, far less in spiritual grandeur, with this Hebrew relic. Perhaps the very oldest writing extant is the papyrus known as the Instructions of Ptahhotep, or The Proverbs of Aphobis,[1] but it is only a string of platitudes, often trivial, and never rising above a very humble level. It is curious and touching to read in it a lament dating from the days of Abraham, over old age, as every way miserable, and there is shrewd worldly sense as well as kindness in such counsel as—"If thou be wise furnish thy house well: woo thy wife and do not quarrel with her; nourish her; deck her out, for fine dress is her greatest delight. Perfume her, make her glad, as long as thou livest: she is a blessing which her possessor should treat as becomes

[1] It has been translated under the former name into French by M. Chabas; under the latter into English, by the Rev. Dunbar Heath. Lauth has translated it into German.

his own standing. Be not unkind to her." But no one will think of ranking such a composition with Genesis. Nor are the later Egyptian records preserved to us any more worthy of being so, as will be seen hereafter.[1]

Assyria has bequeathed us in the clay tablets of her Royal Library a vast collection of documents copied from others of a date at least as early as that of Moses, but they are valuable only for their illustrations of the superstitions, the civilization, and the life of a remote age,[2] or for their incidental corroborations of Scripture.

The design of Genesis is, indeed, itself, enough to show the immeasurable superiority of this first revealed book to all other remains of primeval literature. From the opening to the close it has an aim which sets it far above all uninspired productions. It is an introduction to the history of the dealings of God with man, which forms the ruling theme of the whole Scriptures.

Human interests and occupations of all kinds are touched in the development of this one great subject, but they are noticed only as they bear on it, and always in strict subordination to it. The first chapter of the Bible prepares the way for it by revealing the supreme fact that there is but One Only and Living God, the moral Governor of the Universe: reigning in unquestioned majesty over all things; the Creator of the heavens and the earth and the God of the spirits of all flesh. Then follows the sad story of man's fall which needs Divine

[1] The reader will find illustrations of ancient Egyptian literature copiously given in Maspero's *Histoire Ancienne.*

[2] See Tiele, *Die Assyriologie und ihre Ergebnisse für die Vergleichende Religionsgeschichte*, passim. Lenormant's *La Magie chez les Chaldéens*, and his *La Divination, etc., etc.* Paris, 1874 and 1875. *Early Babylonian History*, by G. Smith. *Records of the Past*, vol. iii. p. 5.

intervention to secure his restoration, and thus the way is opened to tell the story of that heavenly mediation for our good. A few chapters more link the earlier periods of the world with later times, and bring before us the first step in the re-establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, by the selection of the family of Abraham as the depositary of the true religion, for future ages, and the instrument of their spiritual education. How the narrative henceforth follows on, introducing the successive generations of the patriarchs, to the settlement of their posterity in Egypt, we all know.

It throws a mysterious grandeur over the book of Genesis when we look at it in its relations to Scripture as a whole. Exodus takes up the narrative of the chosen people where the earlier book has left it; Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and Joshua carry it on to the final settlement in Canaan. The book of Judges and those that follow lead us through eventful centuries, echoing with the psalms and thanksgivings of the faithful, but also with the denunciations of prophets, till, with Malachi, the canon is closed, as the fulness of time approaches for the final development of God's gracious purposes of mercy. Springing up at distant intervals through more than a thousand years; written in widely different states of society and culture; with men of all ranks, from the eastern king to the simple herdsman, among their authors, all the books of Scripture are found linked to each other in a mysterious harmony of tone and aim; the last completing what all the rest have slowly advanced. Genesis is thus the porch of the great temple of Revelation, leading, step by step to the disclosure of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Head of the new kingdom of God, restored by Him among men, after having been lost in Eden. Scripture proves throughout

to be only so many notes in a Divine harmony which culminates in the angel-song over Bethlehem. What less than Divine inspiration could have evolved such unity of purpose and spirit in the long series of sacred writers, no one of whom could possibly be conscious of the part he was being made to take in the development of God's ways to our race?[1]

But while thus unique in its relation to the history of redemption, Genesis incidentally yields the richest attractions in subordinate details. It gives us glimpses of ancient life more than a thousand years before Herodotus, "the Father of History," was born.[2] The plains of Mesopotamia, the hills and uplands of Palestine, the pastures of the South, and the banks of the Nile, in succession, come before us, with their varied populations, customs, and productions. We wander with shepherd tribes in the desert; see the town life of the ancient communities of Palestine, and the court life of Egypt in the opening period of its greatest glory. Nor are these notices of ages so remote, of doubtful accuracy, and thus of questionable worth. The lengthened references to Egyptian life are demonstrated to be minutely correct, by the evidence of the monuments and documents of these early days which Egypt itself has bequeathed us. The glimpses of ancient races are incidentally corroborated by every advance of knowledge from other sources; the pictures of primitive shepherd life are sustained to the full by the unchanging pastoral customs of the East, even now. Nor is the history given us in Genesis like the pompous inscriptions of equal antiquity left in Egypt or Babylon. Instead of lists of victories and sounding

[1] Ewald, in his *Christus*, has a fine passage on this.

[2] Herodotus and Nehemiah, the writer of the last historical book in the canon, were both alive in B.C. 444.

titles of kings, we have the everyday life of the populations; the light and shadow of human hopes and fears, the flesh and blood forms of beings like ourselves, though separated from us by forty centuries. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and a crowd of other personages introduced, are as real as if they had lived but yesterday.

One great feature of Scripture from its first page to its last should endear it, not only to the professedly religious, but to every one who cares for the welfare of humanity at large. It is the characteristic of all other writings of antiquity that they utterly fail to realize the dignity of man, as man, and ignore the existence of *the people*, except as a mere background to the deeds and glory of the dignified few. In Egypt the masses were held in contempt by the great, as the "stinking multitude," and we search in vain in Egyptian inscriptions and literature for any generous sentiment towards them, or any recognition of their rights or importance in the State. In Asia, from the remotest times, even the high officers of the sovereign have been content to call themselves his slaves. It has been for him to command and for all his subjects passively to obey his every caprice. In ancient Greece the citizens formed a privileged few,—the mass of their fellow-countrymen counted for nothing; and it was the same in Rome till citizenship was extended to all Italy, in B.C. 90, after the Social War, to the unspeakable mortification of the great patrician party. Thus, it marks antiquity everywhere, that privilege alone conferred nationality in any true sense, and that the commonalty at large were treated as a mere herd, of whom no notice was to be taken as having any rights in the State.

In Scripture, however, including the book of Genesis, there breathes a higher spirit of liberty and respect to

man. Instead of giving pompous recitals of the deeds of conquerors and kings, it follows the history of simple patriarchs and their households. Amidst the slavish splendours of Egypt it dwells on the fortunes of an humble shepherd tribe. That there be loyalty towards the One Living God is enough to raise even the exiled Jacob to a prominence in it that is not assigned to rank or power. It enters the shepherd's tent; it follows him in his simple occupations; it turns aside from the palaces of Zoan to bend its regards on the lowly inmates of the Hebrew slave-quarter around. It sees no charms in the merely outward and accidental; the spiritual and essential alone are valued. If these be found on a throne, its occupant has corresponding notice, but if they have retired to the tent or the slave-hut they are followed thither, and the throne is passed by, to reach them.

Scripture necessarily has this Divine, all-embracing spirit of humanity, as the great record of the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. Committed to the care of a chosen family, the progress of this kingdom is the history of that household as it swells to a tribe and to a nation. The story of the common people of the chosen race is thus the great theme of the Old Testament. Genesis, after a brief introductory glance at truths needful to lead the way up to it, devotes itself to this humble but glorious chronicle, and all the subsequent books continue it to its culmination in Jesus Christ.

Respect for manhood, as such—involved in the very conception of a Divine plan of Redemption—colours the whole story of the chosen people. From the first they have their simple patriarchal constitution, by which the community at large is represented in all its interests by elders chosen from its own members, and they retain these through all the oppression of Egypt, the wander-

ings of the desert, and the settled life of Canaan, till the destruction of the nation by the Romans. Despotism never extinguishes this vigorous national life. At times the elders are made the channels of communication between higher authorities and the people; then, again, the community itself is seen gathered in a vast assembly, to hear and decide on great questions directly, but in all cases, as will be seen in subsequent pages, popular liberty is respected, and the concurrence of the people as a whole required in all public action. Thus, while all the world besides was sunk in political slavery, the noblest ideas of liberty found a home in the pages of Scripture. In antiquity these fostered a magnificent spirit of national independence which made the Jew invincible; for though he might be overpowered, he never submitted. And in every age since, they have kindled the virtues of manhood in land after land; for the noblest inspirations of freedom have ever been found among the populations which have drunk in most of the spirit of the Bible. It has been the charter of human rights from the remotest ages, and it still silently protests against every social injustice and oppression. Even in Genesis the lesson is emphatically taught that all men are equal before God, and that true dignity consists not in mere outward rank or illustrious birth, but in the higher qualities of the intellect and of the heart.

The question of the authorship of Genesis and the other books of the Pentateuch[1] has been fiercely debated, and it has even been made a question of orthodoxy to believe that they were composed by Moses in the exact form in which we have them. But a little reflection will show that it in no way affects their sacred authority

[1] The word Pentateuch was introduced by the translators of the Bible into Greek. It means "the Five Books."

to whomsoever their authorship be ascribed; for that of many of the books of the canon is unknown. Nor is it wise to conclude that in the lapse of ages it was not part of the Divine plan that some of the inspired writers should be led to fill up the outline of any sacred book as the requirements of time may have demanded, or to arrange its parts as might be ultimately best. To invent a hard and fast theory on a subject so utterly beyond our comprehension as the composition of a Revelation is at once unwise and rash. It is enough for us that overwhelming evidence sustains our acceptance of all its parts as the inspired word of God, in the form in which we have received them.

Looking simply at Scripture itself, however, it seems impossible to escape the conclusion that Genesis and the other books of "the Law" were the work of Moses. He may, indeed, have been helped by the seventy elders, as the Rabbis assert in their traditions; for Ezra, himself an inspired man, speaks of their having been received by the great Lawgiver from God's "servants the prophets,"[1] but the fact that they are spoken of from Joshua to Daniel and even Ezra,[2] as the Book of the Law of Moses, appears to assume that he was recognized as their author, though this by no means excludes their revision by some of his inspired successors at a later date.[3] In the same way, they are quoted in the New Testament as admittedly his work.[4] The fact that they are spoken of in some passages of different sacred books

[1] Ezra ix. 11.

[2] Joshua viii. 31. 1 Kings ii. 2. 2 Kings xiv. 6. 2 Chron. xxiii. 18; xxv. 4; xxxiv. 14. Ezra iii. 2; vii. 6. Neh. viii. 1. Dan. xi. 11, 13.

[3] See Vaihinger, art. Pentateuch, in Herzog's *Real Encyklopädie.*

[4] *e.g.,* Mark xii. 26. Luke ii. 22; xvi. 29; xxiv. 27, 44. John i. 17; vii. 23. Acts xiii. 39, etc., etc.

by various names, such as the Book of the Law of God, the Book of the Covenant, or simply the Law, is of no weight against this, for we ourselves often use more names than one for the same thing. Nor is the introduction of passages such as that respecting the death of Moses, at the close of Deuteronomy, or of modifications of the laws given in earlier books, or amplifications of the narrative, any reason for assigning the authorship to another than Moses, since it is willingly granted that an inspired successor must have written the notice of his death, and he himself could well have made such alterations in the earlier laws as we find, or have enlarged the details of the narratives by additional circumstances.[1]

It is not, however, necessary to suppose that the whole book of Genesis is an original composition of the great lawgiver. On the contrary, he clearly availed himself of existing documents, as in the story of creation, of which a first account extends to the third verse of the second chapter, while a second occupies the verses that follow. In the one we are told of God as the Creator; in the other of His moral government of the world. Even the name by which He is made known is changed, for in the first the word Elohim is used—a name for the Divine Being simply as such; while in the second He is revealed as Jehovah Elohim—marking to whom the great name of Elohim is to be given.[2] There is no mention in the first

[1] Bertheau: *Die Sieben Gruppen Mos. Gesetze*, p. 19.—Renan (*Histoire des Langues Sémitiques*, p. 117) quotes Philo's notice of Moses as a lawgiver, rather than a historian; but his doing so weighs nothing against the fact, which Renan admits, that the Mosaic authorship was an established opinion in Christ's day—that is, immediately after Philo. See also Renan's *Études*, p. 83.

[2] אֵל (El) is part of various early names of mankind, as in

of the creation of woman, or of the institution of marriage, or of the moral law imposed on the newly created, and on the other hand the sabbath is introduced in the first and not in the second. Moses was evidently inspired to supplement the one account by the other, and thus make a fuller revelation, apparently from two primeval sources, than one by itself would have furnished. But it is only a question of literary interest, at best, to discuss the extent to which he may have been divinely led to employ materials already inviting his selection. Some portions he must have received by direct inspiration; others may have been derived from earlier documents or even traditions, purified from whatever was unworthy; others from personal knowledge. In any case, the book as it stands is to us the very word of God, speaking as only He could, through His servants, to mankind.

Mehujael (Gen. iv. 18), "The Smitten of God." It was also the Phenician name of the Highest God. It is held by Gesenius (*Thesaurus*, i. 49), to mean "MIGHT," as opposed to אֱנוֹשׁ (Enosh) man as "THE WEAK ONE," (Ewald's *Gesch. des Volkes Isr.*, i. 3te Auf., p. 378). Perhaps "THE TERROR AWAKENER" would be the full idea embodied in אֱלוֹהַּ (Eloach), the sing. of Elohim. Related etymologies seem to include this as connected with the conception of MIGHT. Elohim, as a name for the One God, is peculiar to the Old Testament in its oldest portions, and is not found in this use in any other Semitic language. Various theories in explanation of the plural form being thus used have been advanced; but the simplest, and the true one, appears to be, that it is employed as an *intensive*, to express the majesty of Him to whom it is applied, as a plural word is used in Hebrew for the heavens, to express the idea of their immeasurable greatness.—Dietrich: *Abhandlungen zur Hebräischen Grammatik* (1846), p. 44, compared with p. 16 ff.

CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT IDEAS, SACRED AND PROFANE, OF GOD AND NATURE—A CONTRAST.

"THE first leaf of the Mosaic record," says Jean Paul, "has more weight than all the folios of men of science and philosophers." And he is right, for we owe to it the earliest and the grandest revelation of that first principle of all religion—the existence, the unity, the personality, and the moral government of God.

It is in keeping with the whole colour of Jewish thought that the very opening of its literature should be thus especially occupied with such truths, for the whole history of the nation is simply that of its religion. Other races have chosen as their part a political career, or pre-eminence in art, or in philosophical speculation, or in social development; but from first to last the intellect of the Hebrew dwelt supremely on the matters of his faith. He never aspired to take a place among the great empires of antiquity, and has left no record of political revolutions effected by his conquests. The triumphs of the pencil or the chisel he left with a contemptuous indifference, to Egypt, or Assyria, or Greece. The few great efforts of architecture in his country were the work of foreigners hired to erect them. The civilization of Babylon, Assyria, Egypt or Phenicia never took root in Palestine, and was, indeed, abhorred by the strict Jew

as connected with alien races whom he despised as heathen. The seaports of his country were left to other races, and commerce on a great scale was utterly neglected, except for the short time when Solomon himself turned merchant, and sent ships, built and manned by Phenicians, on trading voyages.

Nor had the Jew any such interest in religious philosophy as has marked other peoples. The Aryan races, both east and west, might throw themselves with ardour into the high questions of metaphysics and theology; he contented himself with the utterances of revelation. It never occurred to him as it did to the Hindoo or the Greek, to work out by his own reason the mysterious problems of nature—physical, human, or divine. What they strove to think out for themselves, he accepted as first truths, communicated to his fathers by the Almighty, which it was alike idle and impious to discuss. Many, no doubt, in every generation, indifferently illustrated the national instinct; but from the days of Abraham to the destruction of Israel as a local community, there were always leading spirits, who, by their intense fidelity to the hereditary spirit of their race, vindicated its character as in a special sense the people of God. The world may have inherited no advances in political science from the Hebrew, no great epic, no school of architecture, no high lessons in philosophy, no wide extension of human thought or knowledge in any secular direction; but he has given it its religion. To other races we owe the splendid inheritance of modern civilization and secular culture, but the religious education of mankind has been the gift of the Jew alone.

The account of creation with which Genesis opens illustrates this striking fact. Its aim throughout is to lead from nature up to God, and in this it strikes the

keynote of all that remains of Hebrew literature, which is now comprised in the narrow limits of the Bible.

It is impossible for us, with our hereditary knowledge of the Scriptures, to realize the greatness of the addition made to the religious knowledge of mankind by even the first chapter of Scripture. Primeval revelations of God had everywhere become corrupted in the days of Moses. The all-embracing heaven had itself become divine to the Aryan nations, in their native seat in Western Central Asia; and natural appearances—the sun, the moon, the stars, the clouds, the dawn—had gradually been deified as its children. Transferring to their religion the material conceptions of daily life, there was already a Bride of Heaven, sometimes taking form as the Shadowy Night that divides with Him the rule of the world, and sometimes appearing as Mother Earth.[1] In India and the East, this gradually developed into an identification of the Divine Being with nature. All we see or are—the visible universe—the affections, virtues, or vices; all the spiritual world of gods and genii came to be viewed as only manifestations of Brahma under multitudinous forms.[2] In Western Asia the primitive creed sank into an idolatry which regarded the countless powers or forces of the universe as separately divine. Egypt, indeed, had still a secret and mysterious doctrine of One supreme God, but it was strangely confused by polytheistic conceptions. He was, moreover, a mere abstraction, related to man or the world only as the creator of the gods, who were emanations from Himself.[3] To the initiated these might be but names of different manifestations of the One

[1] Professor Wilkins, *The Aryan Races*, passim.

[2] Dillmann's *Genesis*, p. 7.

[3] *Book of the Dead*, quoted in Maspero's *Histoire Ancienne*, p. 28.

Supreme; but to the multitude they formed an endless crowd of divinities. Among them, the sun, under various titles was the object of the highest veneration; but by a singular perversion of the religious sense, many of the lower animals were also worshipped as incarnations of the gods. In ancient times these heavenly beings had dwelt among men in the persons of the god-kings, but they had ceased to do so when man had been provided with laws and rules by which to guide himself. From that time, they had veiled themselves in the bodies of animals, to watch the course of the world without taking part in it. The cat, the crocodile, the serpent, were sacred forms into which they transfused, as it were, part of their divinity. The jackal, the ibis, the ape, and the scarabæus beetle were adored over all the country. The sparrow hawk, the hippopotamus, and even the serpent were locally divine. The sacred oxen of Heliopolis and Memphis were especially famous. Grovelling homage was paid to these strange divinities. They were fed in costly temples; had numerous and splendid priesthoods; had festivals and high days, were mourned by whole districts, and in some cases by all Egypt, at their death, and were then embalmed and had public funerals. To show disrespect to one was a serious crime; to injure or kill one was punishable with death.[1] No wonder that Juvenal, more than fifteen hundred years after Moses, ridicules a superstition so gross and repulsive.

"Who knows not," he asks, "what kind of omens the mad Egyptian worships. One district adores a crocodile, another grows pale before an ibis glutted with snakes. The golden image of the sacred ape shines afar. . . .

[1] See the story of Phanes, in Ebers' *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 28 ff. The Greek narrowly escaped death; his slave was stoned to death for killing a cat.

Here, whole towns worship cats;[1] there, fishes of the Nile; yonder, a dog. . . . It is a crime to pull or eat a leek or an onion. O, holy nation, whose gods thus grow in gardens!"[2]

Thus, if in some sense it was still true that all men admitted that there were gods,[3] it was no less so that their conceptions were either mere shadowy dreams, or were alike degrading to man and to the objects of his worship.

It is hard to carry ourselves back to the infancy of the world and think aright of the childhood of the human mind. Men felt from their own experience that motion and power were the signs and the results of life, and took for granted that all force, of whatever kind, must imply it. Hence the sun, the moon, and the stars, which they saw moving over the heavens, and whose appearances or absence were connected with the natural phenomena of the world, were fancied to be the intelligent and living causes of the return of spring, the heat and splendour of summer, the bounty of autumn, and the sterility of winter; of the alternation of day and night; the fall of the rains and dews, the rise of rivers; and of the recurrence of storms or of sunny skies. But in his childish awe and ignorance, man could not limit his reverence to these distant and splendid objects. The mysterious force which swelled the bud or ripened the fruit; which poured out the running stream or heaved up the waves of the ocean; the cloud above, and the wind that bore it along; the lofty mountains and the gloomy valley were all alike more or less divine.[4] The simple fancies of savage

[1] Emendation of Brotier. [2] Juvenal, *Sat.*, xv. 1–11.

[3] Cic., *Tusc. Quæs.*, i. 13.

[4] "Have you read in one of our most recent travellers, the story of the American Indian who set out to see the great cataract of

tribes at the present day were then, in fact, the sober belief of all races. Whatever was beyond their simple comprehension was ascribed to an indwelling spirit. Even a great king like Xerxes, in the fifth century before Christ, could not think of the seas or rivers he had to cross as other than living beings, whose favour he had to propitiate, or whose anger he, in his pride, would indignantly chastise. The Hellespont, daring to break down his bridge of boats, must be scourged like a rebellious slave, to cow it into subjection for the future.[1]

No wonder, then, that antiquity had the most confused ideas of creation. With some, matter was eternal and all that is had resulted from the chance coming together of atoms: with others, as we have seen, the universe was only a manifestation of the Universal Spirit, God being Matter, and matter God, or rather the world being itself divine: with still others He was a dreamy abstraction, exercising no influence on man or nature, and alike beyond our conceptions and unfit for our intelligent reverence. Outside the Bible the knowledge of God had perished from among men.

To all the vague and dreamy fancies respecting the Divine Being and the world prevalent in his day, the simple narrative of Moses opposes a simple but sublime revelation, which bears on its forehead the seal of the Living God. In language the simplicity of which befits the remote antiquity in which it was uttered, it declares

Niagara? Already, when far off, the sublime sound made him fancy he heard the voice of the great Spirit. When he came nearer he fell down and prayed—not from slavish terror or dull stupidity, but from a feeling that the great Spirit must be near in a scene so wonderful and grand, and should be honoured in simple reverential prayer,—the best offering he had to make."—Herder's *Geist der Ebräischen Poesie*, vol. i. p. 47

[1] See Grote's *Greece*, on the incident.

the absolute and eternal distinction between the creation and the Creator, and between the creature and Him who formed it. The heavens and the earth are not God, for He made them; neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the stars are God, nor are the seas or the countless wonders, animate or inanimate, they contain, for He has spoken them all, alike, into being.[1] The origin of the universe had been ascribed to Chance or Fate, but Moses in the place of such unmeaning expressions of atheism reveals a Living, Personal, and Only God. Matter had been supposed to be eternal, but he discloses its creation in the first words of his narrative: "In the beginning God *created*[2] the heavens and the

[1] See Robertson's *Notes on Genesis*, p. 3.

[2] "Bara." Of this word Gesenius, in his *Thesaurus*, p. 357 *b*, says:—"The use of this verb in Kal (the conjugation here employed) is entirely different from its primary signification (to cut, to shape, to fashion), and is used rather of the new production of a thing than of the shaping or elaboration of existing material. That the first verse of Genesis teaches that the original creation of the world in its rude and chaotic state was from nothing, while in the remaining part of the chapter the elaboration and distribution of the matter thus created is taught, the connection of the whole section shows sufficiently clearly." Aben Ezra, quoted by Gesenius, gives the same opinion in his commentary on chap. i. ver. 1. Mühlau and Volck, in the new (8th) edition of *Gesenius' Handwörterbuch*, say: "Bara is used only of Divine creation, and *never with an accusative of the material.*" Dillmann (*Genesis* * p. 18), says: "The Hebrews use only the conjugation Piel (intensative) in speaking of human 'forming' or 'shaping,' while, on the other hand, they use only Kal in speaking of creation by God." "There is thus," says Ewald, "a designed and sharply marked distinction of the laborious and artificial 'forming' by man, and the easy, spontaneous creation of anything by God. An accusative of the material is never found with it (Kal) as with other words of forming or making." Dillmann indeed will

* *Kurzgefasstes Exeg. Handbuch zum alten Testament.*

earth;" not formed or fashioned them from previously existing materials. We have not, therefore, to do with a mere incomprehensible abstraction which clouds our comprehension, but with a Living Being, infinite in His

hardly grant that "bara" necessarily involves "creation from nothing," but the only ground he brings forward for this hesitation is what seems to me the incorrect opinion that in verse 27 the production of mankind by natural generation "is traced back to a 'bĕro' of God." I cannot see that it is in any way referred to. Nor is there more weight in the fact that "bara" is at times used in the parallels of Hebrew verse along with the more common words of an allied sense. *It* may be used thus, but they are never used in the special applications in which it is exclusively employed.

Delitzsch says (*Commentar über die Genesis*, p. 91):—"The word Bara, in its etymology, does not exclude a previous material. It has, as the use of Piel shows, the fundamental idea of cutting or hewing. But as in other languages words which define creation by God have the same etymological idea at their root, so Bara has acquired the idiomatic meaning of a divine creating, which, whether in the kingdom of nature, or of history, or of the spirit, calls into being that which hitherto had no existence. Bara never appears as the word for human creations, differing in this from the synonyms 'asak,' 'yatzar,' 'yalad,' which are used both of men and of God—it is never used with an accusative of the material, and even from this it follows that it defines the divine creative act as one without any limitations, and its result, as to its proper material, as entirely new; and as to its first cause, entirely the creation of divine power." See also Umbreit, in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1866, p. 706. Kalisch, *Genesis*, vol. i. p. 1, says: "God called the universe into being out of nothing: not out of formless matter coeval in existence with Himself." Pagninus (*Thesaurus*) has the same definition; "Bara," he says, "is a word appropriate only to God, as the Creator out of nothing."

Staib, in *Studien und Kritiken*, 1852, p. 825, uses it as equivalent to calling into being what was not before. The words "host of them," chap. ii. 1, includes all the inhabitants of the earth, the creatures and even the plants. Gesenius, *Thes.*, p. 1146.

power, indeed, but bodied forth by the attributes of Personality, so that we can intelligently worship Him.

Yet Personality merely in the sense of self-consciousness and will, would not constitute a Being fitted to attract us, if unaccompanied with the attributes of a distinctively moral nature. Mere power might awe and crush us, but it could not command our love, or the consent of our moral nature to its requirements. But the conception of God revealed by Moses adds, forthwith, all the special characteristics which attract the reverence and constrain the heart. It is not enough for a true personality that there be self-consciousness, for one might conceive, as the poets do, of the clouds or the mountains as self-conscious. Nor is the addition of will alone, enough, for even the lower creatures have both self-consciousness, and a power of choice and purpose. A moral character is wanted to complete a personality of the highest type, and this also we find in the Mosaic revelation of God. The creation of the heavens and the earth, and each utterance of an Almighty fiat, imply self-consciousness and will; but there is, also, throughout the whole narrative, the still grander disclosure of a moral character, in the Divine approval of all things made, as "good;" in the beneficence which provides for the wants and happiness of all living things, and, above all, in the requirements from mankind of obedience to a sovereign standard of right, in the will of a Holy and Benevolent Creator.

The God of Moses thus stands in the strongest contrast with all conceptions of the Divine Being attained by unaided reason. He is not only all-powerful and all-wise, but He is the God of love. While the Creator of all, He is, Himself, the Uncreated, and as such Unchangeable. He is subject to no control of blind Fate or

Necessity, but absolutely sovereign: confined to no limits of space, but present through all His works as a watchful Providence. Thus, in the very opening of Scripture the conception given us of God commands our worship as the highest Ideal. No one loftier or purer can ever challenge our homage, for it is instinctively felt that it is in all things perfect. There is no attempt, as in the religious books or legends of other races, to tell the origin of the Godhead. His existence is assumed as a first truth. The Egyptian theology, amidst which Moses had grown up, dwelt on the birth of the gods from Osiris, and told how he, the sun, brought forth the seven great planetary gods, and then the twelve humbler gods of the signs of the zodiac; they, in their turn, producing the twenty-eight gods presiding over the stations of the moon, the seventy-two divine companions of the sun, and other deities. Indian theology spoke of the universe bringing forth first water, then placing in it a germ which, after a time, became a great egg, shining with golden splendour, in which there came into existence Brahma, the father of all creatures. The Greeks constructed genealogies of the gods, transferring to the heavens the whole circle of human experiences and passions. The races of Western Asia laboriously stamped on their clay tablets and cylinders the legends of their greater and lesser gods. But no such unworthy characteristics deface the grand sublimity of Scripture. From the midst of a universal corruption of religion, its solitary but heavenly voice is heard, in the stillness of the very morning of time, proclaiming a God who had existed from all eternity—"before the mountains were brought forth, and before the earth and the world were formed"—a God creating all things by the word of His power, and at the same time One to whom man could

lift his eyes and direct his prayers; in the contemplation of whom he might animate his hopes and forget his sorrows; in the holy perfections of whom he could feel that he enjoyed the sympathy and love of an All-gracious as well as Almighty Father.

Thus the Hebrew race are presented in their earliest records in the light in which they continued to be distinctly noted through all their history, as the one people of God, alone of all the nations of the earth, faithful to Him as a whole, through all their vicissitudes. As Moses opens the sacred writings by proclaiming Him, so the Jew, in all subsequent generations, has continued to witness for Him, till, from the household of Abraham, faith in the One Only Living and True God has spread, through Judaism, Christianity, and Mahometanism well nigh over the earth.

The explanation of such a unique fact has been variously sought. With some it has been ascribed to a fancied devotion of the Semitic nations to the monotheistic idea.[1] But Max Müller, a scholar biased by no theological leanings, has shown the baselessness of this theory. "Can it be said," he asks, "that a monotheistic instinct could have been implanted in all those nations which adored Elohim, Jehovah Sabaoth, Moloch, Nisroch, Rimmon, Necho, Dagon, Ashtaroth, Baal or Bel, Baal-peor, Beelzebub, Chemosh, Milcom, Adrammelech, Annamelech, Nibbaz and Tartak, Ashima, Nergal, Succoth-benoth, the sun, the moon, the planets, and all the host of heaven?"[2] Yet all these divinities were worshipped by Semitic peoples.

"Nor is it possible to explain on merely historical grounds how the Hebrews first obtained and so persist-

[1] Renan: *Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques*, p. 5.

[2] Max Müller: *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. p. 345.

ently clung to this grand first truth. Their chronicles show continual lapses into idolatry, and yet they always recovered themselves; till, at last, after a bitter discipline of national calamities, they finally turned with enthusiastic devotion to the worship of Jehovah.

"Reference to a primitive religious instinct in mankind is as little satisfactory; for though there must have been such an intuitive sentiment in the earliest men as the basis of their future idolatries, it could only have impressed on them the existence of some Divine Being, but in no degree involved the conception of that Being as one and one only, but, as all history proves, tended to the very opposite. Nor can it be said that the Hebrew worked out the great truth by a profound philosophy, for no contrast could be greater between the Jewish mind and that of other nations of antiquity sprung from a different stock, than the utter absence from it of the metaphysical speculations in which other races delighted.

"Yet, while all nations over the earth have developed a religious tendency which acknowledged a higher than human power in the universe, Israel is the only one which has risen to the grandeur of conceiving this power as the One, Only, Living God." No wonder that he concludes, "If we are asked how it was that Abraham possessed not only the primitive conception of the divinity, as He had revealed Himself to all mankind, but passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the knowledge of the One God, we are content to answer that it was by a special *divine revelation*." [1]

God, like the sun, can be seen only by His own light. The first chapter of Genesis, in itself, stamps the canon which it opens with the seal of inspiration.

[1] Max Müller, *Chips, etc.*, vol. i. p. 372.

CHAPTER III.

ANCIENT LEGENDS OF CREATION.

THE question has often been raised, whence Moses obtained the materials from which his account of creation was composed. Were they direct communications from God, or does he describe, as some have fancied, a series of visions mysteriously granted him, or were there any pre-existing documents or traditions, of which he made use, separating, in doing so, the true and pure, by divine inspiration, from the errors and debasements which had added themselves to them?

The two earlier theories of direct Divine communication, and of the presentation of a series of visions before the mind of Moses, of which the lamented Hugh Miller in his "Testimony of the Rocks" was perhaps the most recent advocate, have within the last few years been finally made untenable by the discoveries in ancient Chaldean literature, as deciphered from the tablets and cylinders brought from the long buried palaces and public buildings of Assyria.

From these it is found that the races of Western Asia, which embraced shoots of the Aryan, Turanian, and Semitic stocks,[1] had traditions of the creation and of the great early events in the history of the world, which

[1] "The Aryan Race" is the name given to the stock from

had come down to them from long prehistoric ages. Whence they were derived at first it is impossible to conjecture, though the fact that the tradition of the origin of the world accords so closely with the narrative sanctioned by Divine inspiration seems to show that it must have been an echo from primitive revelation, perhaps in the garden of Eden. The glow of these earliest days lingered in the sky long after their sun had set. That such distant memories should have reached Moses is easily understood when we recollect that Abraham, the father of the Hebrew race, came from their very home in Mesopotamia, and that his grandson Jacob returned thither, and after spending many years in the region of the Euphrates, wandered back to Canaan and thence to Egypt, the land of Moses and the Israelites.

The plains of Lower Mesopotamia had long been the seat of an ancient people when the forefathers of Abraham wandered towards them from the south, that is, from Arabia. Known to us as Accadians, and doubtless connected with the Accad mentioned in Genesis,[1] they had a literature and high civilization peculiar to themselves. Assyrian tablets and cylinders have thrown a strangely full light over this early nation. Their language may be compared to those of the Turanian or Turco-Tatar stem, and seems to indicate that

which the Hindus were an eastern offshoot, and the Celtic, Italian, Greek and German peoples a western branch.

The Turanian languages are so called from "Turan," the Persian name for the countries north of Persia. They embrace the northern division, which includes Mongol, Turkish, Hungarian and other Asiatic languages, and the southern, which is illustrated by the Tamul of India, the Malay, and the Polynesian.

The Semitic languages include the Chaldee and Syriac, the Arabic and Ethiopic, the Hebrew, Phenician, and other dialects of ancient Palestine.

[1] Gen. x. 10.

the races themselves had some connection. Columns of Accadian, or early Chaldaic, as it is sometimes called, are found accompanied, side by side, by Assyrian words to explain them, as already obsolete; but inscriptions and documents in Accadian alone have also come down to us.

To this long vanished people was due the invention of the strange arrow-headed writing of Babylonia, which was at first a system of pictures or hieroglyphics, but gradually developed itself into syllables, though without entirely losing its primitive characteristics. At the time of Abraham, Ur of the Chaldees; Larsam, the modern Senkereh; Arku, the modern Warka, and the Erech of the Bible; and Babilu, the Scripture Babel, or Babylon, had already, for an unknown period, been centres of government, religious worship, and general culture. One ancient king of Babylon is named in the inscriptions of Asurbanipal as having reigned 1635 years before that monarch's conquest of Shushan,[1] that is, about 2280 years before Christ, and another, Kudur-mabuk is recorded as Lord of Elam, and as claiming dominion over the whole land from Syria to that country, which lay on the east of the Tigris; so that even by modern estimate he was a great monarch. The exact date of these early rulers cannot, however, as yet, be definitely fixed from contemporary records; the earliest whose exact period has reached us, excepting from the allusion in the inscriptions of Asurbanipal, being contemporary with Moses, that is, about B.C. 1475.[2]

[1] Smith's *Early History of Babylon. Records of the Past*, vol. iii. p. 8. Schrader (art. *Babylonien*, in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*), says:—1635 before Sennacherib, which would raise the date to about B.C. 2400.

[2] Smith's *Early History of Babylon. Records of the Past*, vol. iii. p. 5 Schrader says, B.C. 1500.

So strangely remote, however, was the rise of this civilization, that all the great temple-structures of Babylonia were founded by kings who must have reigned earlier than the sixteenth century before Christ. Bricks and clay tablets, with their names, and short inscriptions respecting them, have been found in the ruins of their constructions, the vast size of which shows the great power they wielded. Nor was their empire famous only for architecture. The Accadians had already distinguished themselves by careful astronomical observations and calculations; had a carefully graded system of weights and measures; a money system skilfully settled, and a literature of which copious remains are now found in European museums, embracing works on geography, astrology, mythology, grammar, and mathematics; an epic called the Descent of Istar to Hades; psalms or hymns to the gods, curious legends of gods and heroes, and much besides.

Nor were the civil or social affairs of these ancient communities in less full development. Tablets recording laws, royal commands, and government despatches are intermixed with bills of merchants, deeds of sale or loan, and banker's transactions and receipts, while thousands of beautifully engraved seals, dating as remotely, still exist, to attest the progress made in one at least of the arts in these early ages.

On this busy scene of the very dawn of time a new people after a while appeared, wandering from Arabia to the south of Babylonia, and settling first in and round Ur, the present Mugheir, in the delta of the Euphrates. This was the race from a branch of which Abraham was, hereafter, to spring, for they were of Semitic stock. Steadily fighting their way north, they slowly mastered the Accadians and became their rulers; but the con-

querors, like the Romans by the Greeks in after ages, were erelong in turn subdued, in a higher sense, by the culture which they found existing in the regions they had won. Already in the twentieth century before Christ, Sargon I., a Semitic king,[1] after taking Erech, the present Warka, had the old holy books of the Accadians copied and also translated into Semitic—those books, later transcripts of which compose the literary treasures of Assyria which we now prize so highly.[2]

Traces of primitive revelation seem still to have lingered in the populations to which the Semitic element was thus now added. The name of Babylon, or rather Babel itself, means the Gate of El, and El,[3] as we know, is the early Hebrew name for God. In the days of Abraham a knowledge of Him still survived even as far off as Palestine, for we find Melchisedek addressed by the patriarch, and spoken of in the inspired narrative, as a priest of "the most High God, the Maker[4] of heaven and earth;" and the king of the Canaanitish town Gerar is also described as familiar with His name.[5] Yet, far and near, this last reminiscence of Paradise was more or less corrupted by idolatrous additions. The Accadians had received from the past, accounts of Creation, of the

[1] Semitic is the name given to the races speaking a language allied to the Hebrew and Arabic.

[2] Schrader, art. *Babylonien*, in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*. Maspero's *Histoire Ancienne*, pp. 149, 152–166. Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. pp. 63–69. Rawlinson gives B.C. 2548 as the approximate date of the Semitic invasion of Accadia. Maspero and others give B.C. 2000, as the date of Sargon I.

[3] So in the Assyrian inscriptions, but the sense of "confusion" (Gen. xi. 7) is also justified by the Syriac and Arabic.

[4] "Possessor" in the authorized version should be translated "Maker." Gen. xiv. 18–20. [5] Gen. xx. 4.

Deluge, and of other great events, but in all cases they had disfigured them by heathen corruptions. Such as they were, Abraham must have been familiar with them, and through him and his descendants they would reach the days of Moses and become known also to him.

In these primeval traditions as they have come down to us in the old Chaldean form, we find coincidences with the sacred narratives, and also variations from them, which indicate that while we have in no degree discovered the direct sources from which Moses derived his accounts of creation and the early history of the world, we are pointed to still earlier sources common to both. What these were, admits, however, of only one answer. What else could they have been than the accounts given by the common father of Shem, Ham, and Japhet, before the dispersion of mankind, accounts handed thus from beyond the Flood as an heirloom of the antediluvian world? They may have been oral, or they may have been written, for the perfection to which the art of writing had arrived so soon after Nimrod, may well lead us to believe it was an art transmitted from across the waters of the Deluge.[1]

The old Accadian account of the Creation, so strangely recovered, is intensely interesting, at once for comparison and contrast with that of Genesis. Only two tablets, out of at least five, have as yet been found, and both of these are mutilated. The first reads thus,[2]—

When the upper region was not yet called Heaven,
And the lower region was not yet called Earth,
And the abyss of Hades had not yet opened its arms;
Then the chaos of waters gave birth to all of them

[1] See *Genesis and the Brickfields*, by Canon Tristram. Also an article by Riehm, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1866), p. 568.

[2] Translation by H. F. Talbot, Esq. *Transactions of Soc. of Bib. Archæology*, vol. v. p. 426.

And the waters were gathered into one place.
No men yet dwelt together ; no animals wandered about:
None of the gods had yet been born.
Their names were not spoken : their attributes were not known:
Then the eldest of the gods,
Lakhmu and Lakhamu, were born
And grew up . . .
Assur and Kissur were born next
And lived through long periods.
Anu . . .

The rest of the tablet is lost.[1]

Another translation made by the late Mr. George Smith[2] is somewhat different. It runs thus—

When above was not raised the heavens;
And below on the earth a plant had not grown up ;
The abysses also had not broken open their boundaries:
The Chaos (or water) Tiamat was the producing mother of the whole of them.
Those waters at the beginning were ordained, but
A tree had not grown, a flower had not unfolded.
When the gods had not sprung up, any one of them;
A plant had not grown, and order did not exist,
Were made also the great gods ;
The gods Lahmu and Lahamu they caused to come
And they grew . . .
The gods Sar and Kissar were made . . .
A course of days, and a long time passed . . .
The god Anu . . .
The gods Sar and . . .

The fifth tablet reads thus, in the translation of Mr. Fox Talbot—

He constructed dwellings for the great gods.
He fixed up constellations, whose figures were like animals.

[1] *Trans. of Soc. of Bib. Archæology*, vol. v. p. 426.

[2] *Chaldean Genesis*, p. 62. The Assyrians, like the Hebrews, believed that the heavens were first created; then the earth. The words for chaos in Genesis is Tohu va Bohu. In Assyrian the god of chaos is Bahu.

He made the year. Into four quarters he divided it.
Twelve months he established, with their constellations, three by three.
And for the days of the year he appointed festivals.
He made dwellings for the planets: for their rising and setting.
And that nothing should go amiss, and that the course of none should be retarded,
He placed with them the dwellings of Bel and Hea.
He opened great gates on every side:
He made strong the portals, on the left hand and on the right.
In the centre he placed luminaries;
The moon he appointed to rule the night
And to wander through the night, until the dawn of day.
Every month without fail he made holy assembly days.
In the beginning of the month, at the rising of the night,
It shot forth its horns to illuminate the heavens.
On the seventh day he appointed a holy day,
And to cease from all business he commanded.
Then arose the Sun on the horizon of heaven in (glory).

Seven more lines are on the tablet, but unfortunately they are so broken as to be untranslatable. The light shining through ages in the others thus suddenly goes out.

In George Smith's translation[1] the same lines run as follows—

It was delightful, all that was fixed by the great gods.
Stars, their appearance in figures of animals he arranged.
To fix the years through the observations of their constellations,
Twelve months (or signs) of stars in three rows he arranged,
From the day when the year commences unto the close.
He marked the positions of the wandering stars (planets), to shine in their courses.
That they may not do injury, and may not trouble any one,
The positions of the gods Bel and Hea he fixed with him.
And he opened the great gates in the darkness shrouded;
The fastenings were strong on the left and right.
In its mass (*i.e.*, the lower chaos) he made a boiling,

[1] Smith's *Chaldean Genesis*, p. 69.

The god Uru (the moon) he caused to rise out, the night he overshadowed,
To fix it also for the light of the night, until the shining of the day,
That the month might not be broken, and in its amount be regular.
At the beginning of the month, at the rising of the night
His horns are breaking through to shine on the heaven.
On the seventh day to a circle he begins to swell
And stretches towards the dawn further.
When the god Shamas (the sun) in the horizon of heaven, in the east,
. . . formed beautifully,
. . . to the orbit Shamas was perfected
. . . the dawn Shamas should change
. . . going on its path.

The idea of the Bible account of Creation having been taken from such sources as these needs no refutation, for the contrast between them and it is at once apparent. Points of resemblance, however, show that both had a common origin, though the Chaldean story had sunk, even in these early ages, almost to the level of ordinary heathen legends. The first fragment corresponds in its subject to the first two verses of the first chapter of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." In both accounts the present order of things rose from a watery chaos,—the Tehōm of the Scriptures, the Tihamti[1] of the legend,—the same word being thus used in both narratives for the primeval condition of the world. But here the resemblance ends. In the legend the world is supposed to be created from pre-existent matter, not as in Scripture out of nothing. While the first words of Genesis proclaim the One Living God as the Creator of

[1] Or, Tiamat.

all things and Himself uncreated, the legend has no higher conception than that "none of the gods had yet been born," and that the "great gods,"—Lahmu and Lahamu, male and female,—"were born and grew up," to be followed after a time by numerous lesser deities, their offspring. It has no higher thought of the Divine nature than to transfer to it the difference of sexes, and people heaven with male and female gods. Tantu, the sea, and Absu, the abyss, beget Mummu, that is, chaos. This again brings forth Lahmu and Lahamu, the male and female principles of force or growth: from Lahmu springs Kissar, the lower expanse; from Lahamu, Assur or Sar, the upper expanse; and from these again come Anu, the heaven, Anatu, the earth, Elu or Bel, and Beltis, while the earth and the heaven produce the planets, from whom again spring the lower gods.[1]

Thus the whole is only the deification of the different parts of nature in an ever increasing number.

The second fragment is a parallel to the fourth day of creation: "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night; He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

As the first tablet thus corresponded to the first and

[1] Smith's *Chaldean Genesis*, p. 60.

second verses of Genesis, and the fifth to the fourth day, fragments left of what seems to have been the seventh speak of the acts of the sixth day. Hence the legend appears to have resembled the Scripture narrative in the division of creation into the work of successive days, while in Mr. Talbot's translation the seventh, in the legend as in Scripture, is "appointed a holy day" on which all labour was commanded to cease. In Mr. Smith's translation, again, the successive stages of creation would seem, in the legend, as in Scripture, to have been pronounced good. In the former, however, instead of the simple statement that the heavenly bodies were set "as lights in the firmament," we are told that the stars were arranged in constellations, with the figure of animals; a reference to the astronomical fancies of the signs of the zodiac; but both agree that they were designed for marks of the seasons and measures of time. In the belief that the planets were living beings, the Chaldean account ascribes palaces to them, but as they might wander from their courses, the gods Bel and Hea were set to watch over them and keep them from such a misfortune. The ninth line of the tablet, with true primitive simplicity, speaks of great gates fixed on the left hand and the right, through which, perhaps, the luminaries are to pass at rising and setting. In the eleventh line the difficulties of translation are well shown, for while Mr. Smith translates it, "In its mass (the lower chaos) he made a boiling," Mr. Talbot renders it, "In the centre he placed luminaries," and this being the later version is probably the more correct. The creation of the moon precedes that of the sun, and the former, of which alone the tablet gives a complete account, is described as intended to rule the night and to fix the holy assembly days of each month.

The only other fragments of the legend as yet found is part of the seventh tablet, and is translated as follows by Mr. Smith:—

When the gods in their assembly had created . .
Were delightful (good) the strong monsters . . .
Cattle of the field, beasts of the field, and creeping things of the field . .
They fixed for the living creatures . .
. . cattle and creeping things of the city they fixed to . .
. . the assembly of the creeping things, the whole which were created
. . which in the assembly of my family (that of the god Assur, the heaven) . . .
. . and the god Nin-si-ku (the lord of the noble face) caused to be two . .
. . the assembly of the creeping things he caused to go . .[1]

This fragment corresponds to the sixth day of creation: "And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle of their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good." Possibly the allusion in the eighth line to "the two" is to the first man and woman but if so there is nothing more recovered respecting them.

Such is a complete copy of the fragments of this early literature which so strangely illustrates the Scripture version of creation. The resemblances and the variations speak for themselves, leaving the immeasurable superiority of the narrative of Moses beyond comparison. The Chaldean account has, at most, only here and there some traces of the grand simplicity which characterises

[1] Smith's *Chaldean Genesis*, p. 77.

that of Scripture throughout. At the best, it glows only with a darkened light :—

> ". . . As when the sun new risen
> Looks through the horizontal misty air,
> Shorn of his beams,"—

while the Bible story is like the light of a morning without clouds. In each, the brightness must needs have come from the same holy source; but in the one it shines clear; in the other, it struggles through mists and clouds.

One important bearing of these old legends must not, however, be overlooked. It has been latterly accepted as a recognised peculiarity of the early chapters of Genesis, that they consist of separate and independent documents, marked by the use of the name Elohim for God in the one and Jehovah in the other. The first chapter and the first three verses of chapter ii. are attributed to the "Elohist"; the rest of chapter ii. and also chapter iii. are ascribed to the "Jehovist," and are held to be a second account of creation. But the Assyrian tablets contain not only the "Elohist's" account of the six days, but also that of the fall of man, by the "Jehovist." The story of Genesis thus existed, before Moses, in its completeness, both as a whole and in detail, and even in the order of its incidents; the two parts which critics propose to regard as independent and separate, forming a single connected and consecutive narrative. It would indeed argue nothing against the Mosaic authorship of the sacred book if he had used different sources, under Divine guidance, but it seems at least worthy of notice that the mere change of the Divine name does not seem to prove that he did so.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BIBLE AND MODERN SCIENCE.

A LIST of the treatises published even within the last fifty years on the relation of the Bible to Modern Science would be a long one. Klee, de Luc, de Serres, de Rougemont, Hugh Miller, Challis, Dawson, Warington, Rorison, McCausland, McCaul, Fairholme, Pfaff, Böhner, Lange, Ebrard, Delitzsch, Keerl, Pianciani, Reusch, Schrader, Riehm and Godet are only a few of the able writers attracted to this subject, each with a fresh theory more or less differing from those of all before him.

The zeal to defend the Word of God from all hostile attacks is a noble one, but the history of the past is a continuous lesson of the supreme importance that it be a zeal according to knowledge. Every great discovery in science has, in turn, been viewed with suspicion by worthy but mistaken theologians, and every error in physical science, now exploded, has been vindicated by what was held at the time to be the voice of Scripture. Augustine denounced the idea of there being "antipodes, or men on the opposite side of the earth, with their feet opposite our feet," as "on no account to be believed," since it would contradict Scripture.[1] The roundness of

[1] Aug., *De Civitate Dei*, lib. xvi. c. ix.

the earth was thought to be satisfactorily disproved by the text which speaks of the heaven being stretched out like a curtain.[1] Galileo was forced to sign a statement that "the proposition that the sun is the centre of the universe and immoveable from its place, is absurd, philosophically false, and formally heretical, because it is expressly contrary to Scripture," and that "the proposition that the earth is not the centre of the universe, nor immoveable, but that it moves, and also with a diurnal motion, is absurd, philosophically false, and at least erroneous in faith."[2] Did not the Bible say that the world was established that it *cannot be moved?*[3] Even so acute a mind as that of Calvin urged that this text proved conclusively that the earth is at rest in the heavens, and that the sun moves round it.[4] Nor were other passages apparently less decided. Was it not written, "God laid the foundations of the earth, that it *should not be removed for ever.*" "*The earth abideth for ever.*" Was it not clearly taught that the sun moved, not the earth, by such language as, "In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom *coming out of* his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to *run a race.* His *going forth* is from the end of the heaven, and his *circuit* unto the end thereof." "The sun also *ariseth,* and the sun *goeth down,* and *hasteth* to the place whence he *arose.*"[5] Columbus was assailed with quotations from the book of Genesis, the Psalms of David, the Prophets, the Epistles, and the Gospels, to prove the impiety of his belief in the existence of America.[6]

The mistake in such cases was that men went with

[1] Ps. civ. 2. [2] Quoted in *Essays and Reviews,* p. 208.
[3] Ps. xciii. 1. [4] Calvin, *On the Psalms,* on Ps. xciii. 1.
[5] Ps. civ. 5. Eccles. i. 4. Ps. xix. 4–6. Eccles. i. 5.
[6] Irving's *Columbus,* vol. i. p. 46.

their preconceived ideas to the Bible, and interpreted it so as to support them. Instead of taking the only safe course in reference to the phenomena of nature, of drawing their conclusions from the patient and wide observation of facts, they accepted their hereditary notions as infallibly right, and read Scripture by their light.

Nothing can be more certain than that the truths proclaimed, on sufficient evidence, in nature, are as much a revelation, in their sphere, of the ways of God, as the higher disclosures of the Bible. The records of the marble tablets of the hills are traced by the finger of the Almighty as truly as were the characters on the tables of Sinai. To reject the witness of the skies or earth, or to refuse their story of His doings, is no less to refuse "Him that speaks from heaven" than if we turned away from the revelations of His written Word. Nor is it to be forgotten that a truth of natural science, sufficiently established, is henceforth beyond controversy, and cannot be impugned by any supposed meaning we may attach to particular texts. The sun, for example, is virtually at rest, and the earth moves, notwithstanding any array of verses our ancestors brought to disprove it.

It is of supreme importance, moreover, that we demand no more from Scripture than God intended it to yield. It was given to reveal Him to us and to make known His laws and will for our spiritual guidance, but not to teach us lessons in natural science. To expect them is to anticipate disappointment.

A little consideration will, in fact, make it evident that the sacred books could only express themselves according to natural appearances, and not in scientific terms, if they were to be understood in any age by the mass of men. We stand, even now, at the threshold of the secrets of nature, and habitually use language based

on the unscientific teaching of the senses. The ends of the earth—the rising and the setting of the sun—the overarching skies—are still familiar expressions, but are, of course, incorrect. If forced to lay them aside it would be hard to replace them by intelligible phrases which would be scientifically blameless. But, fifteen centuries before Christ, that is, when Moses lived, the language of natural appearances must have been universal, for science was as yet unborn. To use it was to employ what alone was then understood, or would be continuously intelligible in every future age, for no other mode of expressing physical truth would even now suit the mass of mankind.

Nor would it have been enough had Moses and the other sacred writers used scientific language suited to the present day. If they used such language at all, they must have done so with such exactness as to anticipate all the discoveries of the remotest future, and thus some texts would to the end of time have seemed as incorrect, from our ignorance, as others, written according to natural appearances, are foolishly said to be, from our partial scientific attainments.

It is not the object of Scripture, moreover, to reveal what we may ourselves discover, and it would have permanently enfeebled the mind of the race if the stimulus of research had been rendered unnecessary. Besides, we can neither receive nor utilize natural knowledge without a previous development and training of the faculties, only possible by the phenomena of nature being left for our own investigation. Great discoveries can be recognised as such only if the time be ripe for them, nor is any decisive step in intellectual advance more than the mere completion of a progress stretching through all the past. What any age does or thinks is

but the development of all that has been done and thought from the beginning. The connection of the sciences involves an advance in all, to make use of a further advance in any. How many links must there have been in the chain that led ultimately to the discovery of the true motions of the heavens? Egypt, Chaldea, Greece, Rome, and the Middle Ages had all contributed, whether by their errors or discoveries, to the conclusions on which Copernicus based the theory ultimately proved to be the true one. We cannot force unnaturally the education of mankind any more than that of an individual mind. Antiquity abounds with approaches to great discoveries which, after all, were not made, because the world was not ripe for them. Printing was all but discovered in Babylonia, where the habit of stamping clay tablets seemed inevitably to suggest it. There is a Roman ring in the British Museum with a device and some initials, engraved for stamping with ink as an attestation to documents. But the mind of the race had not as yet become fit to go further, and it was left to the awakened activity of a later age to see the supreme importance of such hints. It would, therefore, have been worse than useless, for Scripture to have anticipated scientific results which required an indefinite future to make them intelligible.

It must, therefore, be an error to look for the exactness of scientific statement in the Scriptures. They were given for a specific purpose and for that only, and in other matters use only the simple language of the senses which all ages from the earliest to the latest can understand.

Hence, while all are agreed in the testimony which Genesis bears to such leading truths as the self-existence of God, His unity, personality, and goodness, the creation of the world by Him, His absolute independence of, and

distinctness from it, the appearance of man as the latest production of the Almighty, and other matters, there has been the greatest difference in the explanations offered to harmonize the details of the sacred narrative with scientific facts.

On the first utterance of Scripture, indeed, that the earth, after its creation, lay in a state of chaos for unknown ages before order began to appear, there is a unanimity of assent, not only from the friends but from the critics of revelation.[1]

Mr. Goodwin says, in the "Essays and Reviews"—"The first clear view which we obtain of the early condition of the earth, presents to us a ball of matter, fluid with intense heat, spinning on its own axis and revolving round the sun. How long it may have continued in this state is beyond calculation or surmise. It can only be believed that a prolonged period, beginning and ending we know not when, elapsed before the surface became cooled and hardened and capable of sustaining organized existences. The water which now enwraps a large portion of the face of the globe must for ages have existed only in the shape of steam, floating above, and enveloping the planet in one thick curtain of mist."[2] The meaning of the "days" of the Mosaic account has been the subject of frequent argument, some thinking them periods of twenty-four hours, others lengthening them to ages. Which opinion is correct is a matter of individual judgment, but men

[1] In the religion of Zoroaster (Zarathroustra) the universe and man are created by Ahouramazdu, the good and great god, in six successive periods, forming in all a year of 365 days. Man was created last, without stain. By the way, the Phenician name for our first mother is Havah—the same as the Hebrew, which we English as Eve. Lenormant, *Les Origines de l'Histoire*, p. 52.

[2] *Essays and Reviews*, p. 213.

equally orthodox have held both. The idea that they meant ages was advocated by Hugh Miller, who considered that he could identify the work of the fourth, fifth, and sixth days, respectively, with the geological phenomena of the earliest, middle, and later rocks; the presence of light before the visible appearance of the sun, moon and stars on the fourth day, being accounted for by the rising and dissipating of the dense veil of mist which till then had hidden them.[1] Godet explains the presence of light without the sun by the exceptional state of things in a world still intensely heated; a condition which might develop sources of light entirely independent of the sun, as we know is done in a disturbed state of the forces of nature.[2] Umbreit on the other hand turns away from natural explanations and introduces something higher, when he tells us that "the sun is only a single and special outflow from the source of light in God Himself, which must stream forth from Him on all manifestations of Himself such as creation."[3]

The distribution of the six days, whether regarded as periods or in the ordinary sense, so as to reconcile the apparent teaching of Scripture with the facts of geology, has exercised the ingenuity of a great many able writers. One of the latest of these may, perhaps, be taken as a sample of the rest, for as all differ in some particulars it would be wearisome to quote from any number of the theories offered. Professor Reusch, of Bonn,[4] finds the first day's creation represented by what was a few years since represented as the Azoic period, or that in which no life was supposed to exist on our earth. But it is

[1] *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 152, n.
[2] Godet: *Études Bibliques*, vol. i. p. 90.
[3] *Studien and Kritiken* (1839), p. 192.
[4] *Bibel und Natur.* (Freiburg, 1862.)

necessary to move back the opening of creation to a date still more inconceivably remote, since Sir William Logan and Professor Dawson have discovered what seem to be undoubted proofs of life, though only of the simplest kind, in the oldest known stratified rocks—the Laurentian group of Canada.[1] The second day Reusch fancies to represent the "Ferns, polypi, annelid or worm-like creatures, and crustacea," of the Silurian and Devonian systems of rocks. But the upper Silurian rocks already contain the remains of fish, which were not created till the fifth day. The third day's work is found by Dr. Reusch in the rise and wonderful development of the colossal vegetation of which we have the remains in the coal measures. But the remains of a cone-bearing tree are found in the Old Red Sandstone,[2]—a great bed of rocks belonging to the Silurian system, or at least underlying what was till latterly known as the Devonian—rocks already attributed to the work of the second day. The creation of birds and fish, which are the subject of the fifth day's work in Genesis, is thought by Reusch to be illustrated by the fossils of the rocks stretching from above the coal measures to the Oolite, though not including it. But fishes had been created for long ages before these rocks were slowly deposited in the new oceans of this later period, by the wearing away of continents which had not risen from the deep when fish first made their appearance. It is doubtful if birds had as yet appeared, for some footprints found on the New Red Sandstone, in Connecticut, formerly thought to be those of a bird, are more probably the work of a reptile.[3] The creation of quadrupeds and reptiles, assigned to the sixth

[1] *Eozoon; or, The Dawn of Life.* By Professor Dawson. (London, 1876.)

[2] *The Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 11.

[3] Alleyne Nicholson's *Palæontology*, 2nd edition, vol. ii. p. 252.

day, in connection with that of man, is supposed by Dr. Reusch to be represented by the periods of the Oolite, Lias, and Chalk. But though the Oolite and the Lias are marked by the abundant remains of gigantic reptiles, these were not the first of their order on our earth, for, ages on ages before, there had been reptiles during the coal-forming period.[1] As to quadrupeds, the remains hitherto found have been mostly limited to those of small marsupial, or pouched animals, like some now living in Australia. Moreover, between the Chalk and man there stretch out periods to be measured only by long successions of ages. Indeed, man finds a place at all only by extending the period supposed to represent the sixth day, over the vast series of revolutions from the time of the Oolite to the present—revolutions involving repeated changes of the land surface of vast regions, the wearing away of continents by the air, the rain, and the storm, and the slow growth of new mountain-high strata in the bottom of the ocean, from their dust.

It is clear from this abstract that it could not have been the design of God to give in the few opening lines of Genesis an exact scientific statement of the stages observed in creation. The sublime truth that nature was prepared step by step for the appearance of man, is the great lesson intended, and science corroborates it throughout. There has been, undoubtedly, from the beginning, a steady advance from lower to higher forms of life and vegetation. It is found indeed that Cuvier's arrangement of the animal kingdom is exactly that which the rocks exhibit.[2] Man is recognised by the highest authorities of modern science as beyond question the ideal being towards whose appearance "nature had been working from the earliest ages; a being therefore whose

[1] Jukes' *Geology*, p. 254. [2] *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 14.

existence had been foreordained." These are Professor Owen's words. Not less striking are those of Agassiz. "There is a manifold progress," says he, "in the succession of beings on the surface of the earth. This progress consists in an increasing similarity to the living fauna,[1] and, among the vertebrates especially, in their increasing resemblance to man. But this connection is not the consequence of a direct lineage between the faunas and floras[2] of different ages. There is nothing like parental descent among them. The fishes of the Palæozoic[3] age are in no respects the ancestors of the reptiles of the Secondary age, nor does man descend from the mammals which preceded him in the Tertiary age. The link by which they are connected is of a higher and immaterial nature; and their connection is to be sought in the view of the Creator Himself, whose aim in forming the earth, in allowing it to undergo the successive changes which geology has pointed out, and in creating, successively, all the different types of animals which have passed away, *was to introduce man upon the surface of our globe. Man is the end* towards which all the animal creation has tended, from the first appearance of the first Palæozoic fishes."

To revert for a moment to the reconciliations proposed between the work of the six days and the disclosures of science, perhaps the most satisfactory is that of the late Dr. McCaul, Professor of Hebrew in King's College. His essay, published in "Aids to Faith," is very able, and in many respects deserves attention. He holds that the first verse is an account of the original act of creation, which may have preceded the changes related in the rest of the chapter by millions of years. The existence of light is explained, as by Reusch, from the masses of re-

[1] Animal kingdom. [2] Flora—the vegetable kingdom.
[3] The age of ancient life.

volving cosmical vapour, the condensation of which, on the nebular theory, produced the world. It is not said, he adds, that the sun was created on the fourth day, but only that, with the moon and stars, it was then appointed to rule the day and night, and to measure time. The "days" are not to be measured by the sun, but by light and darkness, which God called day and night, and their length has not been revealed to us. They are, indeed, held to have been vast periods. The seventh day, like the other six, is an indefinite period, but the six creative periods cannot be identified with those of geology "from the fact that of the work of two days of the Mosaic account geology knows nothing, and astronomy nothing certain; namely, that of the first, on which the light was called forth; and of the fourth day, when the sun and the planetary system were perfected. Moses gives an outline of the history of creation, such as would be intelligible to those for whom he wrote, and suitable as an introduction to Divine revelation, and on both accounts necessarily limited in the matter and brief in the narration."

It is unnecessary to quote Dr. McCaul's full and learned discussions of Hebrew words, but his summary of results is admirable. "Moses relates how God created the heavens and the earth at an indefinitely remote period, before the earth was the habitation of man—Geology has lately discovered the existence of a long prehuman period. A comparison with other Scriptures shows that the 'heavens' of Moses include the abode of angels, and the place of the fixed stars, which existed before the earth. Astronomy points out remote worlds, whose light began its journey long before the existence of man. Moses declares that the earth was or became covered with water, and was desolate and empty. Geology has found by investigation that the primitive globe was covered with

a uniform ocean, and that there was a long Azoic period, during which neither plant nor animal could live. Moses states that there was a time when the earth was not dependent on the sun for light or heat; when, therefore, there could be no climatic differences. Geology has lately verified this statement by finding tropical plants and animals scattered over all places of the earth. Moses affirms that the sun, as well as the moon, is only a light-holder. Astronomy declares that the sun is a non-luminous body, dependent for its light on a luminous atmosphere. Moses asserts that the earth existed before the sun was given as a luminary. Modern science proposes a theory which explains how this was possible. Moses asserts that there is an expanse extending from earth to the distant heights, in which the heavenly bodies are placed. Recent discoveries lead to the supposition of some subtle fluid medium in which they move. Moses describes the process of creation as gradual, and mentions the order in which living things appeared, plants, fishes, fowls, land animals, man. By the study of nature geology had arrived independently at the same conclusion. Whence did Moses get all this knowledge? How was it that he worded his rapid sketch with such scientific accuracy? If he in his day possessed the knowledge which genius and science have attained only recently, that knowledge is superhuman. If he did not possess the knowledge, then his pen must have been guided by superhuman wisdom."[1]

Aids to Faith, pp. 232–233.

It is curious to find Dean Colet so long ago as the dawn of our English Reformation, in treating the narrative of creation in Genesis, show a freedom and independent judgment which seem to anticipate the most modern spirit of inquiry. It is well to notice this fact in connection with the great father of English Protestantism, that no one may think harshly of good men whose

But while it is certain, to use the words of Bunsen,[1] "that it will be seen more and more as years pass, that the full light of science does not eclipse the truth of the Bible, but only leads us, by its discoveries, to understand the sacred pages aright, and shows more and more convincingly their imperishable worth," it is well to remember that their glory as a Divine revelation lies in a far higher sphere than that of mere physical studies. "The divine, in the Semitic revelation," he adds, "lies in its spiritual conceptions. On this account it is, and remains, the treasure of humanity; intelligible to the humblest, commanding the reverence of the wisest; the only story of the origin of our race which we can harmonize with our natural conception of God or with science."[2]

The following table is compiled from the 2nd edition[3] of the *Manual of Palæontology* of Prof. Alleyne Nicholson, perhaps the greatest living authority in Britain, on ancient life. It indicates the succession of plant and animal life in the world, as far as at present known. The oldest rocks are naturally placed last, the others in the order of superposition.

Kainozoic, or New Life.	Post Tertiary.	That is, up to the present era. Man, sheep and goats, cave lion, huge kangaroos.
	Pliocene.	Swordfish, walrus, hares. The Tertiary vegetable world (including the rocks to the Eocene) was very much like what it is at present in hot and temperate climates.
	Miocene.	Oxen, elephants, bears, land tortoises (one in India 20 feet long and 7 feet high) sloths, whales, sperm whales, dolphins, rhinoceros, tapirs, camels, seals. Beasts of prey abounded. Beavers. Lichens.
	Eocene.	Deer. Beasts of prey begin. Dogs, rats, mice, bats, lemurs, animals related to the horse, to the pig, to the tapir, to the whale. Snakes, crocodiles. Deer. Mammalia begin to abound. Sturgeon, Frogs and toads, newts and salamanders. Pillworts.

conclusions respecting this portion of the Mosaic writings may be different from one's own.

I may add, as an illustration of the slow growth of natural science, that Colet speaks of five elements: air, earth, fire, water, and ether. "Below the stars," says he, "are the inhabitants of fire and air." *Letters to Radulphus*, p. 14.

[1] *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 30. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 35. [3] Edin. 1879.

MESOZOIC, OR MIDDLE LIFE.

CRETACEOUS (CHALK).—Fishes with bony skeletons begin. True sharks, huge lizards (75 feet long in some cases), crocodiles (America), gigantic extinct reptiles of Lias continue. Toothed birds. No mammalia found as yet in Chalk. First certain appearance of trees like the forest trees of our own temperate regions, the oak, beech, fig, poplar, walnut, willow, alder, etc. Also palms.

OOLITE, OR JURASSIC, (Lias, the lowest rocks).—Fourteen small mammals found in upper beds of Oolite. A single specimen (the earliest) of a bird. Turtles, lizard animals. In Lias and Oolite, gigantic extinct reptiles, the ichthyosaurus, plesiosaurus, megalosaurus, pterodactyle, and many others, in great numbers.

In Lower Oolite. Oldest known crab. Three or four small marsupial quadrupeds.

TRIASSIC.—Three or four small mammals found in the uppermost beds. Footprints, "in great part or wholly the work of reptiles." Crocodile animals. Great animal, half reptile, half bird.

Marked change in the vegetation as compared with that of the Permian and Carboniferous periods. Abundance of cycads.

PALEOZOIC, OR ANCIENT LIFE.

PERMIAN.—First undoubted remains of a reptile, the protosaurus. Turtles and tortoises. Vegetable world nearly related to that of the coal measures. Ferns, cone-bearing trees, etc., etc.

CARBONIFEROUS (Coal, limestone, etc.).—Sea snails, scorpions, spiders, millipedes, winged insects. The limestone in many places, over large areas, and for a thickness of many yards, almost entirely made up of the remains of stone lilies (crinoidea). The footprints of the cheirotherium (*handbeast*). Vertebræ of a large creature believed to be allied to a frog. Vegetable world much the same as that of the Devonian rocks. Fungi, cone-bearing trees, flowering plants, etc., etc., as in Devonian, gigantic club mosses and horsetails.

DEVONIAN.—Winged insects. This is the age of armoured fishes, the scales ganoid or enamelled, and hard as bone; forming a true armour. Plants abundant. Cone-bearing trees, ferns, tree ferns, club mosses, horsetails, tree allied to our hardwood trees. Representatives then flourished of almost all the great groups of plants which grow at present.

SILURIAN.—Starfish, sea urchins, creatures allied to sharks, stone lilies, trilobites, sea urchins. Bivalve shells related to oysters, cockles, etc., abound.

LOWER SILURIAN.—Worm-like creatures, cuttlefish, creatures allied to the nautilus, corals, zoophites, stone lilies. Seaweeds, ferns, horsetails, club mosses, a cone-bearing tree (allied to the pines), tree allied to conebearers and to cycads.

CAMBRIAN.—Stone lilies, bivalve shells, shells like whelks, limpets, etc. Crustaceans of a low type allied to shrimps. Possibly, seaweeds.

HURONIAN.—

LAURENTIAN.—Eozoon—if an organized form?

Mr. St. George Mivart tells us that "The first known mammals of Europe and North America in the Permian and Oolite formations resembled forms now living in Australia; and at the time of the deposition of the oolite beds, 'cycads' (trees related to both palms and tree ferns) and 'Araucarias' (gigantic pines, of which the Norfolk Island pine is an illustration) inhabited England. Again, in Eocene times we had lemurs, true opossums,

tapirs, alligators, and gavials, simultaneously, in Europe, and chameleons in America, while the character of the fauna (the animals) of the southern part of South America seems to have been European. In Miocene times, long-armed apes, giraffes and rhinoceroses existed in Europe, while giraffes and orangs existed in India. Indeed, at that period, there appears to have been a rich fauna, more or less common to Asia, Europe, and Africa, from which the existing Indian and Ethiopian fauna have, as it were diverged, becoming increasingly different. In Pliocene times camels, rhinoceroses, elephants, and horses, all co-existed in North America as well as Europe; while later, in South America, huge precursors of the sloths ranged the forests (the trees of which they felled and fed on) as great marsupials in Australia preceded the smaller but closely allied marsupials of our own day."—*Contemporary Review* (Feb. 1880), p. 299.

CHAPTER V.

JEWISH IDEAS OF NATURE AND OF CREATION.

IT would be interesting and instructive if we could carry ourselves back to the simple age when Moses first told the story of the Creation to the multitudes of his people, lately slaves in Egypt, but now wandering in the desert spaces that hem round the Promised Land. What ideas could they have attached to the words which to us are so full of significance?

The humble Jew, so lately toiling in the brickfields of Rameses, must have been in all intellectual respects a child of nature. His ideas of the world around him and the sky over him could have been formed only from the impressions of the senses, uncorrected by the reasonings or the discoveries of science. He had heard in Egypt that the sun was the supreme god and that the other heavenly bodies were divine; that the Nile was no less sacred and supernatural, and that even the lower animals in the houses, the streets, and the fields, were in many cases sacred. It was only in his own hut that he had learned, perchance, of something higher and better, if his circle retained, after four hundred years, any remembrance of the Lord God of their fathers, whose very name had been forgotten by most of his race.[1]

[1] Exod. iii. 13.

As to the world in which he lived, or the sky above him, what could he know? The first rude attempt at a map was a wonder to a king of Egypt nearly a thousand years after this,[1] and at a still later period the Tigris and Euphrates were the eastern bounds of the Hebrew world—the southern shore of the Black Sea, and the district stretching from it to the Caspian, his farthest north. In Europe he knew only the shore of the Mediterranean; Egypt and its western and southern territories summed up his knowledge of Africa.[2]

Nor need we boast, for the maps of our forefathers reveal almost as narrow conceptions of the world. A Mediæval map of the earth could not be recognised as such without careful study, as I shall have occasion to show in a future page.

The nearest approach we have to the ideas of the actual configuration and phenomena of the world in an age so remote as that of Genesis, is furnished by the ancient tablets of Nineveh, which reveal the notions entertained on these subjects by the race originally supreme in Mesopotamia—the so-called Accadians—whose glory had already departed before Abraham's day. The world, they thought, was a mere hollow convex skin, like a round boat or bowl. The upper surface was the earth with its waters; the concavity below, the abyss where the genii and the dead had their abode. Through this dark and cheerless region the sun made its way each night. Over the earth, the sky, studded with its fixed stars, stretched itself like a covering, and turned round the mountain of the east, the pillar which joins

[1] Anaximander of Miletus, B.C. 611–546, made the first attempt at a chart of the world. It was on brass. Eber's *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 208. Hecatæus, B.C. 520, made a second.

[2] See map by Merx. Schenkel's *Bibel Lexicon*. *See* p. 242.

heaven and earth and serves as an axis for the celestial vault. The centre of the earth, however, was different from that of the skies, for like many ancient nations, the Accadians fancied their own land in the very middle of the world, while the mountain over the peak of which the sky of the fixed stars revolves was in the north-west. The sky as a whole rested on the edge of the earth, outside a great circle of ocean waters, which they, like the Greeks and other ancient nations, believed surrounded the world. The planets moved in a heaven below that of the fixed stars, and were the sources of the thunder, which, again, by rending the clouds let the rain escape through their openings.[1]

The ideas of physical science and natural phenomena which prevailed in the second century before Christ must have been far in advance of those of the days of Moses, thirteen hundred years earlier, and thus may help us to realize the notions of the ordinary Hebrew of that remote age. By a fortunate chance we find many of these in the Jewish Book of Enoch of that date,[2] from which the following are taken What must have been the simplicity of the mind which could write as follows: "And they took me away to the place of the storm wind and to a mountain whose peaks reached to heaven. And I saw bright shining places[3] and the thunder at the ends of them. And they took me to the so-called water of life, and to the fire of the west[4] which receives every setting of the sun. And I came to a fiery stream, where fire flows like

[1] Lenormant: *La Magie chez les Chaldéens*, p. 140.

[2] *Das Buch Henoch.* Ed. Dillmann.

[3] The places where the light is stored up and from which the lightnings come.

[4] The fire of the west is a great fire ocean into which the sun dips each night to take up fresh fire for the next day.

water, and pours itself into a great sea towards the west. And I saw all the great rivers, and came to a great darkness, and went on to where all the dead wander about. And I saw the mountains of the black clouds of winter and the place into which the waters of the whole Deep pour themselves. And I saw the mouths of all the streams of the world and the mouth of the Deep.[1]

"And I saw the storehouses of the winds and the foundations of the earth. And I saw the corner-stone of the earth and the four winds which bear up the earth and the firmament of heaven. And I saw how the winds spread out the heights of the heavens, and they blow between heaven and earth and are the pillars of heaven. And I saw the winds that turn the heavens, and bring the circuit of the sun and of all the stars to their setting. And I went farther towards the south, where it burns, day and night, where the seven mountains of precious stones are." Beyond this he came to a place "where heaven and earth come to an end, and it serves for a prison for the stars of heaven and for the host of heaven. The stars which roll over the fires are those which have broken the commands of God by not rising at the time appointed them, and He was angry with them and bound them till the time when their punishment should be fulfilled.[2]

". . . From thence I went to the ends of the earth on which the heaven rests, and I saw the doors of heaven open. And I saw how the stars of heaven came out, and counted the doors from which they came out. . . . From thence I went to the north and saw the ends of the earth there. Here I saw these doors of heaven open. From each of these come out north winds: when they

[1] Apparently the ocean which was thought to flow round the earth.

[2] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 17, 18.

blow it brings cold, hail, hoarfrost, snow, dew, and rain. When it blows only from one of these doors it is good, but when it blows from the others, it storms and brings distress on the earth.[1]

"From thence I went to the south, to the ends of the earth there, and saw there open doors in the heaven. From out of these come forth the south wind, the dew, rain, and wind. Thence went I to the ends of the heaven at the east, and saw there three doors of heaven open, and over them little doors. Through each of these little doors come out the stars of heaven, and run towards the west on the way which is shown to them.[2]

". . . And then I saw closed storehouses from which the winds are sent abroad, and the storehouses of the hail and of the mist and of the clouds. And I saw the houses of the sun and of the moon, from which they go forth and to which they return, and how they add nothing to their prescribed course and take nothing from it, and keep truth one with another, holding to their oath.[3] . . . And I saw again lightnings and the stars of heaven, and I saw how the angel called them all to him by name and they hearkened to him. And I saw how they are weighed out with just balances, according to their light, and the distance of their course, and the time of their appearing and circuits, and how one lightning begets the other, and their circuits, according to the number of the angels, and how they keep truth among themselves. Also, another thing saw I concerning the lightnings, how some stars become lightnings and nothing is left of the stars.[4]

"And I saw six doors from which the sun goes forth,

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 33, 34.
[2] *Ibid.*, Kap. 36.
[3] *Ibid.*, Kap. 41.
[4] *Ibid.*, Kap. 43, 44. This refers to "shooting stars."

and six doors into which it passes in setting; the moon also rises and sets through these doors, and the leaders of the stars, with the stars which they lead. I saw also many windows right and left of these doors. And first goes forth the great light called the sun. The waggon in which it rises upwards is driven by the wind, and, when it sets, the sun vanishes from heaven and returns by the north, to get to the east again, and is so led that it comes to the proper door and shines in the heaven. In this way it rises through the great door, in the first month, the fourth of the six doors of the east. And in that fourth door, through which the sun rises in the first month, are twelve windows, from which, when at their appointed time they are opened, a flame comes forth. The sun rises through that fourth door for thirty days, and goes straight over to the fourth door of the west and sets through it. . . . Then it returns to the fifth door for thirty mornings, and sets through the fifth door in the west for as long, and so, next, with the sixth doors in the east and west, for thirty-one mornings." Having completed this series of changes they are then repeated backwards from the sixth door, successively, to the first door, the changes making the difference of the length of day and night round the year. "And so it rises and sets and never ceases or rests, but goes on day and night in its waggon, and its light is seven times as great as that of the moon, but in size the two are alike."[2] "And I saw twelve doors in the round of the sun-waggon in heaven from which the beams of the sun break forth, and from them goes forth heat over the earth, when they are opened in their season." "And I saw waggons in the heavens such as there are on the earth, in which the never setting stars move."[3]

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 43, 44. [2] *Ibid.*, Kap. 72. [3] *Ibid.*, Kap. 75.

The writer's knowledge of the earth is on a par with that of the heavens. He tells us that the earth has exactly seven highest mountains, seven greatest rivers, and seven greatest islands. It is hard to decide what mountains he means, but the rivers are less doubtful. The first comes from the West and pours itself into the "Great Sea"—that is, the Mediterranean. This is undoubtedly the Nile, which is conceived as flowing from the south-west, if indeed "west" be not a corruption for "south." Two, which must be the Euphrates and Tigris, come from the north, and pour their waters into the "Erythræan Sea," the common name for the Arabian and Persian Gulfs and the Indian Ocean. The four others "come from the north to their sea, two to the Erythræan Sea, two empty themselves in the Great Sea, or according to some in the wilderness." The Indus and the Ganges, which rise north of the writer, seem to be meant by the first two, the Oxus and Jaxartes by the others; the Black and Caspian Seas being supposed part of the Mediterranean. But perhaps "they lose themselves in the desert," that is, in Arabia! There is no mention of Europe at all, and Africa is known only by the Nile, while Eastern Asia is a mere dim imagination. Of the seven greatest islands two are on the land; that is, are land lying between rivers. These would be, apparently, Mesopotamia, and the island of Meröe on the Nile. Five are in "the Great Sea," the Mediterranean, and are no doubt Cyprus, Crete, and Rhodes, with perhaps Sicily, and the Morea, which might easily be fancied an island.[1] So small was the world to the Jew even in the days immediately before Christ.

If the heavens and the earth were so limited to His remote posterity, what must they have been to the

[1] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. 77.

wondering minds of those who looked out on them from the tents of the forty years wandering? How must the words of the first chapter of Genesis have sounded when they were heard for the first time, in all their startling contrast with the ideas of creation till then unchallenged? We can fancy the tribes assembled in the great "plains" of Wady es Sheykh and of Wady er Rahah, or of Wady Sebaijeh, under the mighty cliffs of Sinai,[1] rising terrace above terrace around, to hear the first reading of the book of the covenant;[2] the cloud of the Presence covering the mount, and the awful splendours of the Divine glory lighting through it "like devouring fire." The first words as they fell from the lips of Moses or of the elders, and sounded far over the listening thousands, through the clear Eastern air, were themselves a stupendous revelation. Hitherto they had heard, in Egypt, for centuries, of Osiris and Horus, and a countless multitude of gods. They had seen men worshipping the sun as the great king of heaven, and the stars and moon as lesser deities, and they were soon to show in the demand for a golden calf, the Egyptian symbol of the gods Apis and Mnevis,[3]

[1] Stanley (*Sinai and Palestine*, p. 42) supposes the former two open spaces the scene of the assemblies of the people Furrer (Schenkel's *Bibel Lex.*, art. Sinai) thinks the latter the place. The various neighbouring peaks of the Sinai group range from 6,500 to 8,000 feet in height above the sea level.

[2] Exod. xxiv. 7.

[3] Amos v. 25, has been referred to the period of the wilderness life, but Assyrian study shows it to have been spoken of Amos' own day. Schrader translates the verse "Ye will, therefore, take up Sakkoth your king, and Kewan, your star-god—your idols—which you have made for yourselves, and I will lead both you and them into captivity." Sakkoth, in Assyrian = Adar, an ox-faced god = Saturn = Moloch. Kewan (Assyrian) = Saturn. *Studien und Kritiken* (1874), pp. 324–332.

that the gross ideas of the Nile valley had sunk deep into their minds.

But now they hear that "In the beginning, One, only God created the heavens and the earth;" created, not fashioned them. What the "beginning" meant they could have understood as little as we, but it at least destroyed the universal belief of their day that nature was self-existing and eternal. They had no grand ideas of the vastness of the universe such as our astronomy has awakened. The High and the Low was their only conception of sky and earth. Nor had they even a word for the universe in our sense.[1] What they saw around and over them in the horizon of day or the splendours of night, was to them the creation. All this they now heard was the work of Elohim, a name conveying to them the conception of power and might, and in its plural form that of awful and incomparable majesty.[2] Henceforth it becomes the glory of Israel, too often indeed to be forgotten by many, but yet to be treasured by the faithful, till at last it becomes the passionate boast of all, that this one living God summed up in Himself the power and glory of all the idols of Egypt and of the nations. From this time the great spirits of their race, age after age, realize Him as He who sitteth upon the circle of the earth; before whom its inhabitants are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain,

[1] See Umbreit, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1866), pp. 706 ff.

[2] Elohim is the plural, and is used as we use the plural pronoun in speaking of royalty, or even in common conversation. Thus we use "you" constantly for "thou." Some have fancied that the plural form is a relic of polytheistic usage, wrested from its primitive force by the Hebrews, and consecrated to the One God alone. It may be that this is so, but the usage does not require such an explanation. *See note*, p. 11.

and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.[1] The moment of such a revelation was a supreme instant in the history of the world.

As the words of the second verse sounded forth—"And the earth was waste and wild, and darkness rested upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit, or breath, of God brooded upon the face of the waters"—a vision of universal desolation and darkness would rise before the awe-stricken multitudes; of a heaving, fathomless, incomprehensible abyss, tumultuous like the stormy ocean, which they had seen so lately when they crossed its dried bed. There was a time, then, they would think, when these sky-piercing mountains, at whose foot they stood, were not, nor the great sky, nor the wide earth; when there was only a shoreless surging chaos, veiled in night and terror; a waste lighted by no beams of sun or stars. But over this, when it pleased Elohim, His spirit went forth to brood, dove-like, and wake it to life and order. To us the picture is familiar from infancy, but what must it have seemed when first proclaimed.

But now they hear—"And God said, Let there be light, and there was light." So then the mighty light is the first-born of God. He Himself remains unseen and unimagined, but His approach, to form a world, is heralded by the glorious splendours of day. No sun is mentioned; the mind is left to think only of the face of God. It is His coming nigh, covered with light as with a garment, the light of an Eastern sky; veiling Himself in the insufferable brightness that fills the wide earth and heaven. Presently, before Him, the horror of thick darkness, terrible as that of the land of the shadow of death, rolls away like clouds before the sun, and the weltering chaos lies in brightness.

[1] Isaiah xl. 22.

In Egypt they had worshipped Seb, the principle of evil, as well as Osiris, the beneficent; but now they heard that Elohim reigns alone, as the Author of good, for the sacred light was good, and He had sent it. Henceforward, they hear, it was appointed that the light and the darkness should each have its separate place,[1] its special nature, and its fixed time of appearing. So day and night are alike the gift of God, and both alike are full of His presence. Primeval darkness, before which they had trembled, He has called night, "the veiled and dark;" the holy light is to be known as Day, "the shining." And so the first day has ended, not as with us, in darkness, but, as if in auspicious augury for our world, with the bursting forth of the new created light.

And now, as the voice of the speaker proceeds, a new scene opens. The wild and waste landscapes of chaos stretch out, cleared of the mantle of mists and vapours till now lying dense upon them, and a wide expanse appears, bearing up the clouds into which these had been transformed. The blue sky overcanopies all, with its ministries of rain and dew, so grateful in the burning East; for the firmament is the storehouse of both, and it is thence that they drop fatness over the land. How the waters rise and are sustained aloft the simple Hebrew does not dream, except that it is by the power of God; nor does he know more of the aërial heights than that they are "the expanse," or "the high," in which the clouds and rains have their appointed place.[2]

[1] Job xxvi. 10; xxxviii. 19.

[2] I cannot forbear quoting the following magnificent passage from John Ruskin, a man in my opinion not less great as a prose poet, or as the foremost art critic of the age, than for the still higher glory of his splendid unselfishness; his constant

There is now sky and light, and chaos, but presently there is another advance, showing that God is a God of order, working out His ends by successive regulated steps. His voice is anon heard commanding the waters

labours in every direction to benefit his fellow men; his lofty conception of the claims of Christianity and his practical homage to that standard.

"An unscientific reader knows little about the manner in which the volume of the atmosphere surrounds the earth; but I imagine that he could hardly glance at the sky when rain was falling in the distance, and see the level line of the bases of the clouds from which the shower descended, without being able to attach an instant and easy meaning to the words, 'expansion in the midst of the waters.' And if, having once seized the idea, he proceeded to examine it more accurately, he would perceive at once, if he had ever noticed anything of the nature of the clouds, that the level line of their bases did indeed most severely and stringently divide 'waters from waters,' that is to say, divide water in its collected and tangible state from water in its divided and aërial state; or the waters which *fall* and *flow* from those which *rise* and *float*. I understand the making the firmament to signify that (so far as man is concerned) most magnificent ordinance of the clouds; the ordinance that as the great plain of waters was formed in the face of the earth, so also a plain of waters should be stretched along the height of air, and the face of the cloud answer the face of the ocean; and that this upper and heavenly should be of waters, as it were, glorified in their nature, no longer quenching the fire, but now bearing fire in their own bosoms; no longer murmuring only when the winds raise them, or rocks divide, but answering each other with their own voices from pole to pole; no longer restrained by established shores, and guided through unchanging channels, but going forth at His pleasure like the armies of the angels and choosing their encampments on the height of the hills: no longer hurried downwards for ever, moving but to fall, nor lost in the lightless accumulation of the abyss, but covering the East and the West with the waving of their wings, and robing the gloom of the farther infinite with a vesture of divers colours, of which the threads are purple and scarlet, and the embroideries flame."

to gather together to one place, and the dry land to appear. The great Seas and the firm Earth assume their bounds. The mountains and dry land rise from the deep, and the waters that couch under, retire within the girdle of their shores. Israel learns that it was God who by Himself established the world and set fast the everlasting hills.

Presently they hear,—How, at the Almighty word, the slopes of the hills and the sweeping valleys are clothed with the tender grass, strewn with flowers, and roughened with waving forests. The lifting up of the mountains had created rivers; the calling forth of verdure and shadowing trees completes the ideal of joy to these children of the burning East. How must it have sunk into the hearts of all, to use the words of their own singer of other ages, that it is God, great and good, "who caused the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil that maketh his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart." Could it then have been known that the grasses which yield this bread had been specially created for man's use, at his appearance on the earth, and did not belong to those earlier works of God of which we find the remains stored up for fuel, or bedded in the depths of the everlasting hills, the gratitude would have been still more vivid. For it is a great fact that while trees and plants of many kinds are found in formations of all the geological periods but the earliest, the grain-bearing grasses only came into existence when man appeared. There is not the slightest vestige of them in any of the strata; they are found only in surface deposits, in connection with the first signs of human presence. Along with them also, strange to say, are first found the herbs that

minister to our pleasure, of which the sage, the marjoram, the mints and lavenders,[1] are representatives—and still more striking, the fruits that delight the taste and maintain the health, the apple and all its related trees, the peach, the plum, the almond, the strawberry, and the like.[2] The Hebrew was doubtless filled with wonder at the goodness that had prepared the great table of nature for man so richly, but we may doubly feel it when we know that the round earth was filled with the finest of the wheat, and adorned with roses and flowers and luscious fruits, and made fragrant with mint and spikenard and frankincense, to greet man's birth.

As yet, however, the multitudes had heard nothing of the creation of the heavens except the spreading out of the expanse above the earth. But now they learn that on the fourth day God commanded the two great "light-bearers" of the sky, and the great host of the stars, to shine forth, and serve their purpose to the new created world. Other nations worshipped them as, themselves, living and divine, but it was not to be so in Israel. They were only the creation of God's hand, and the obedient servants of His will. To man they would cheer day and night—the sun, the ruler of the day, the moon the queen of night; the stars, so preternaturally bright in Eastern lands, attending her and adding to the brightness. They would, moreover, serve for Signs, to mark out the heavenly spaces, to warn men of the storm, or give them hopes of brightness, and by their eclipses and changes, to teach the ways of God—and they would fix the Times, throughout the year, for man's ordinances or employments, the weeks, the months, the years themselves, the days of festivals and worship, with much besides. The keynote

[1] The Labiatæ.

[2] The Rosaceæ. See *Macmillan's Bible in Nature*, p. 100.

thus struck gave the tone henceforward to the relations of Israel to nature worship. The vaulted heavens were but the work of God's fingers: He had ordained the moon and the stars. What an education for a people; filling their hearts with thoughts till then unknown!

The heavens, lighted with sun and moon, and sown with stars, now shine down on the earth, but as yet there is no life. All things, however, are now ready for it, and the sacred roll tells forthwith, how God, advancing step by step, in Divine order, next spoke into being all things that fly, and all that swim; the tribes of the air and of the waters—the two blue oceans, one over, one around; the birds and other creatures, small and great, to sail through the one; the fishes and sea beasts, through the other. Nor can we think there would be wanting a response of reverent filial love, when it was heard that the Eternal, forthwith, blessed His new made creatures. It would be theirs to be fruitful and multiply, and fill the seas and the earth. The teeming increase of the finny tribes was due to the bounty of Elohim, and He had given the bird its joyous life in the wide air. All are His, and all look up to Him. The thought thus awakened sank into the national mind. In after ages the Hebrew poet was to sing:—

> Beside the springs which Thou sendest into the valleys,
> The springs which run among the hills, . . .
> The fowls of the air have their habitation,
> Which sing among the branches. . . .
> In the great and wide sea—
> Are creeping things innumerable,
> Both small and great. There go the ships,
> There is that leviathan which Thou hast made to play therein.
> These wait all upon Thee!
> That Thou may'st give them their meat in due season.[1]

[1] Ps. civ. 10, 12, 25–27.

The air and the waters now rejoice in living tribes, but the earth itself has as yet no such gladness. Now, however, God brings forth from it living creatures of all kinds; cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth; the wild tribes of the woods and of the deserts; cattle of all kinds for the use of man, but also the serpents and worms, and footless creeping things; and once more pronounces His blessing on all. Even the dreaded reptile and the humble worm, and the fierce tribes of the woods are His creatures, as well as the useful and loved. All things are from Him alone! No evil spirit has had a share in Nature, as the nations have dreamed. The heavens with their lights; the earth with its mountains and seas, its cedars and fruitful trees; the waters with their swarming populations, the air with its multitudinous life, already praised the Creator; and now the cattle on a thousand hills, and the beasts of the forest are added to the number of His works. Lesson is quickly following lesson, to form the creed of humanity. Centuries after, such teaching finds an echo in the words of Job, so well had it been learned—

Ask now the beasts, that they may teach thee,
The birds of the heaven, that they may let thee know;
Or inquire of the earth, that it may instruct thee,
And let the fishes of the sea give thee knowledge:—
Who knows not, among all these,
That the hand of God hath created the whole?
He, in whose hands are the souls of all living things,
And the breath of all mankind![1]

But among all the creatures none had yet appeared able to honour and worship the great Creator. Each race depended on a higher, but the highest of beings yet

[1] Job xii. 7–10. Ewald's version. The date of Job is apparently the 7th century, B.C. So, G. Baur, Merse, Ewald, Bleek, De Wette.

made had neither reason nor the faculties of spiritual life. Now, however, it is told how man was created in God's image, of the dust of the ground, and endowed with a living soul from the breath of the Almighty Himself. What that "image" meant to the Hebrew it is easy to imagine. God had been revealed to him as holy and just and pure, and he felt in his own breast the capacity to know what such attributes meant, and to imitate them in his own soul. God was the Highest wisdom, and he felt that he had himself caught a beam of His nature in the possession of reason with all its powers. God was the Sovereign Lord of man himself, of all the creatures, and of the inanimate glories of heaven and earth. The Hebrew felt that in this respect he was the representative of the Creator to the animal world;[1] for all feared him—all were made subject to him or might be made so, for pleasure, or for use. He had seen, in Egypt, the lion trained to hunt for his master, and leave the prey he caught uneaten, himself returning to his master's side,[2] the cat trained to fetch the wounded bird from the thickets of the Nile, and even the hyæna tamed and made of use.[3] He had watched the Egyptian harpoon and noose the huge hippopotamus, and catch and drag by force, to shore, the hideous crocodile.[4] Even the powers of nature were strangely subject to his will,—for the air filled the sail, the rocks were quarried into temples, the mines yielded their wealth, and the wisdom of the Egyptian priests had searched out many secrets of plants, and minerals, and even

[1] Goethe's saying in this light, is striking: "Man is the dog's god."

[2] Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 221.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 238.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 241-3.

some mysteries of the distant stars and of the planets. Such endowments bespoke the possession of the Image of God. But, if so then, how much more so now, when man has made the lightning his messenger, and laid a pathway for it in the depths of the seas, to run forth on his will;—has tamed the thunder;—crosses the ocean in the face of wind and storm;—has climbed into the skies and descended to the bottom of the waters;—has pierced the hills to make himself a way, and passes from place to place at the speed of a bird.

Nor were the very form of man,—erect, noble, looking to heaven, for man alone naturally looks upwards,—and this fair body,—only the veil and image and instrument of the soul within,—less divine. Between the lordly Adam and all creatures else, how great the gulf!

The Mosaic account of creation carried all this, and much besides, to the hearts even of those who first received it. So great a revelation had never been made to man, for it disclosed the existence of the One Eternal, Holy, Just and Good God,—a God of wisdom and order, as well as purity and truth, and implied His right to our absolute obedience and love, as the work of His hands. There remained only another self-disclosure, of still greater condescension, when He declared Himself to mankind in the person of His incarnate Son.[1]

[1] On the ideas of creation among those who first heard the record of Genesis, see Herder's *Älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts*, pt. i.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AGE OF THE WORLD.

THE mysterious era of the creation of the world must be kept carefully distinct from that of the creation of man. With the former Scripture has nothing to do; the latter is abundantly vindicated by the corroboration of advancing knowledge.

But while the inconceivable remoteness of the creation of our earth, and the vast periods through which it has been slowly brought to the condition in which man appeared on it, are subjects apart from the direct scope of Bible illustration, they so vividly aid us to realize the greatness and glory of the Creator, that a few pages devoted to them cannot be out of place.

The discoveries of geology have conclusively proved that periods vast beyond imagination must have elapsed since the first stages of the history of our earth. The thickness of the solid crust of rocks, which hides the fiery secrets of the interior, has been variously estimated at from a few miles, to six hundred, or even two thousand five hundred,[1] but the wide contrast in these estimates is, itself, enough to show how little reliance can be placed on any of them. Yet it must have taken incalculable

[1] The second is the view of Mr. Hopkins, the third that of Sir Wm. Thompson.

ages for the glowing surface to have cooled sufficiently to make possible even the first of the great sedimentary deposits, forming the lowest stratified rocks. Nor could the oldest water-formed beds now surviving be the earliest rocks that existed, for they must of course, themselves, have been the result of the slow wearing away of others still earlier.

Avoiding as much as possible anything like difficult terms, the story of our earth, so far as hitherto made out by science, leads us, apparently, to a time when the vast round on which we live was only slowly condensing, by the various attractions and revolutions of the solar system. Men of eminence favour the idea that worlds like ours were gradually consolidated from the nebulous matter which abounds in all regions of the heavens; believing that the currents and eddies of the universe, aiding the attractions and combinations of matter, were the agencies used by the Almighty in their original imperceptible growth and building up. It is argued, indeed, that this very process is now seen going on in one case, at least, among the planets—that of Saturn, and that the nebulæ so common, and so marked by their spiral or whorl-like, or fantastic shapes; if in some cases aggregates of stars, are in others the loose material of growing worlds. Nor is there anything contrary to Scripture in such a theory, for we are told nothing of the mode in which God created the universe, whether perfect at once, or growing and blossoming into worlds by the slow ripening of what to us would be innumerable ages. He carves out mountains and valleys, now, by the slow and feeble agencies of winds and rains and dews: why should He not, if He choose, build up worlds with as calm deliberation, through the unresting, unhasting progress of His own laws? Enough for us that the matter that forms

them is His creation, and the skill that moulds that matter into the wonders of a world, His alone.

The first clear view we obtain of the early condition of the earth, shows us a ball of matter, fluid with intense heat, spinning on its own axis and revolving round the sun.[1] How long this state of things continued is beyond calculation or surmise, but it is evident that a period of immense length must have passed before the heated mass had so far cooled down and hardened as to present a solid foundation for the future elaboration of God's plans. The restless waters which now fill the vast hollows of the earth's surface, or glide through its valleys, must have existed for ages only as a dense curtain of steam, shrouding and muffling the glowing centre beneath. But contraction, due to cooling would, meanwhile, rend and shrivel the world into the roughness of hill and dale, while the fiery energies within would upheave its surface into mountains or depress it into ocean beds.

When, at last, the cooling of the surface permitted the waters to condense and descend, the first step in the formation of the vast beds of rock which now form an aggregate thickness of miles, began. Rains, ocean currents, the action of the air, and the flow of rivers and torrents, commenced their slow labours in the wearing away this earliest land, and carrying it into the watery depths, to be spread out in layers, or "strata." How soon life appeared is unknown, for the lowest water-born or "stratified" rocks are so changed in their substance by the fierce heat then prevailing, that all traces of animal or vegetable organisations must have been destroyed in their lower sections. Vast accumulations of gneiss, thousands of feet thick, the worn ruin of granite mountains, attest the length of this earliest chapter in world-

[1] C. W. Goodwin, M.A., *Essays and Reviews*, p. 214.

history. But even in the beds of this remotest period—known as the Laurentian gneiss of Lower Canada—science has discovered what seems to some to be the remains of a living organism[1]—a curiously perfect coralline structure of a type peculiar to these rocks. The presence of an early vegetation also seems implied in some mineral remains that have been found. The rocks in which these first known existences present themselves were, however, doomed, like all things in nature, to pass away. Seamed and furrowed into a mere skeleton of their original vastness, they slowly sank again below the ocean, and other systems began to be deposited on their broken outline. For it is to be remembered that the stony ribs of our earth were in no case formed over all the world at once, but always, just as at present, only over areas more or less restricted. The elevations and subsidences of the earth's surface have always been local; one portion rising as another sank, in answer to the retreats and advances of the fiery energies within. Further, each successive continent, with its mountains and plains, has from the first been wearing away piecemeal, even before it rose from the ocean waters, for the seas were at work to destroy their own creations before they had emerged from their depths.

Fancy, now, on the broad back, or on the upturned edges of the lowest existing strata, other beds slowly deposited, from the dust of mountains and valleys, or from the wreck of shells and plants, or by slow chemical precipitation from the waters; as in the case of the vast mountain depths of limestones in every age of the world.

[1] *Eozoon; or, The Dawn of Life*, by J. W. Dawson, LL.D. (1876). Prof. Alleyn Nicholson (*Manual of Palæontology*, 2nd ed., vol. i. p. 104) leaves it an open question whether Eozoon be not merely a crystalline marking. *See, before*, page 44.

Through what spaces of time must the Almighty have been slowly working? It has been the same alike with the long succession of the rocks, and of the races they entomb. These, also, have flourished for their day and then have given place to others. As with man himself, so with the scenery of the solid world. Each series of landscapes may have had a longer day than short-lived humanity, but Homer's fine comparison of the succession of the generations of men to the budding and fall of the leaves of summer, is as true of the hills as of the fading race to whom they seem eternal.

> Like as the generation of leaves, so also that of men;
> For the wind strews the leaves on the ground; but the forest,
> Putting forth fresh buds, grows on, and spring will presently return.
> Thus with the generation of men; the one blooms, the other fades away.[1]

The Huronian and Cambrian periods show an aggregate depth of from four to six miles of slate rocks and hard sandstones, often greatly changed by the internal heat of the earth, but all formed, through ages we cannot even imagine, by the same immeasurably slow process by which similar beds are doubtless even now rising, at the bottom of some lake or sea, from the mud, clay, sand and pebbles of existing mountains and valleys, borne into them by rivers and floods. Stone lilies, bivalve shells, the casts and pipes of worms and polyps, shrimp-like shapes, shells like limpets, and slight impressions of one knows not what other simple organisms, or possibly of seaweeds, alone remain as witnesses of the life of these ancient seas.

But the world of these ages slowly passed away, and in its place, as slowly, rose that of the Lower and

[1] *Iliad*, vi. 146.

Upper Silurian periods, represented by an immense series of slate rocks, flagstones, and sandstones, lime-stones, and conglomerates, many thousand feet in thickness. Simple shells and humble creatures, perfect in their structure, but allied to no higher classes than shrimps, crabs, and lobsters, or to sea urchins and starfishes, reigned for ages as the prevailing types of the life of the Lower Silurian seas, while the stone lilies, a kind of starfish growing in a jointed stem, with its body bent into a cup, and its fingers divided into numerous jointed strings and threads, became the most noted living form of the earlier ages of the Upper period. But the types of life prevailing in the lower beds already show, in these earliest ages, the constant law of evanescence which marks all things in nature; for some had, even thus soon, passed almost wholly away. Others, however, as if to assert the unity of design which reigns from first to last in creation, still survive, through all the changes of land and sea which have so often made and remade our earth. But new forms appear in the Upper Silurian and Devonian beds, marking an advance in the Creator's plans. Along with the remains of huge lobster-like creatures, are found the teeth and shagreen of fish allied to the shark, and the indestructible forms of others, of a type perhaps marking an age when the ocean was as yet far warmer than now—fish clad in bony mail, doubtless the terror of the seas they inhabited. Creatures of the vertebrate type, though of its humblest order, had thus at last appeared. The Devonian rocks or Old Red Sandstone, in their thickness of at least two miles, show many types of these strange forms; but there is a further advance in nature by the appearance of the earliest known tree vegetation, a true cone-bearer.[1] Plants, like humble club mosses and

[1] *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 11.

minute ferns, are found in the lower beds, and these are followed by large ferns, and by analogues of the fir or pine, whose dark shadow was the first cast on our world, so far as we know, by any kind of tree. In the upper beds, indeed, trees are found allied to our hard-wood varieties, and representatives flourished of almost all the great families of plants which grow at present. There were even winged insects.

The Coal-forming Ages now began to heap up their various beds, in succession, on the Old Red Sandstone, to a depth of one and a half to two and a half miles.[1] The outburst of vegetation during this era speaks of a condition of air and earth unknown before or since. The heavy veil of clouds that had hitherto shrouded the world must have gradually become thinned and broken by the advancing coolness of the earth, permitting the sun to shine down more and more brightly. The atmosphere would still, however, be loaded with a great excess of carbonic acid gas, and the climate over the whole world must have been close and sultry, from the radiation of the still high internal heat. Local climate, or zones of greater heat and cold, were as yet unknown, for coal is found in every latitude, from the poles to the equator. Indeed, it is a striking fact that from the earliest ages to that of the Chalk there is no evidence of any belts of climate like those familiar to us now. The arctic zone, throughout all this immeasurable period, had the same warmth as the then existing Switzerland.[2] The earth seems indeed, during these vast cycles, to have drawn a continuous summer from its own warmth, rather than from the sun alone. Nearly half the plants of the coal ages were ferns, but some of them grew as high as trees, while

[1] Jukes' *Geology*, p. 222.

[2] Heer's *Primeval World of Switzerland*, vol. ii. p. 268.

gigantic club mosses and horsetails vied with huge pines, often rising over a hundred feet from the humid and steaming soil. Along with these a due proportion of humbler plants grew into deep beds, filling up lakes and morasses, age after age, till the slow sinking of the ground covered them with the silt and mud beneath which they now lie buried. Coal-beds, indeed, are simply forests and fens that have flourished near the water's edge, and have settled so imperceptibly, that the roots of the trees still remain in the soil as they grew, and even light seeds of plants have not been drifted away. But how long must it have taken for the growth of such masses of vegetation as now form thick beds of coal, under the pressure of vast layers of rock? And what periods are represented by the sinking of these beds to the depths at which we now find them. Seedtime and harvest were as measured in their succession then as now. Life had its seven ages in the various creatures existing, as in their analogues now. Spiders hunted their prey among the leaves, butterflies flitted in the glades, fish swarmed in the waters then as to-day. Yet the ages on ages of the Coal Measures are only a day in the history of our world!

Space will not permit the going into longer detail; a few paragraphs more must suffice. Even yet we have not reached the limits of what is called the Primary epoch of geology. Above the Coal Measures lie Sandstones and the Magnesian limestone 400 and 500 feet thick, with higher types of fish, formed in all respects like those of the present. Conglomerate rocks, formed of fragments of others, lie also heaped up to the thickness of 1,000 feet, but, above this vast aggregate still rise before us the great series of rocks known as those of the periods of "middle" and of "recent" life.[1] Three thousand feet of marls, sand-

[1] The three names are Palæozoic, Mesozoic, and Kainozoic.

stones, beds of pebbles, freestone, and great beds of rock salt and gypsum, known as the New Red Sandstone or Triassic rocks, now meet us. The Oolites come next, 3,000 feet thick, showing the first birds and quadrupeds, and the reign of reptiles huge almost as whales; then the Chalk with its clays, etc., to a thickness of 1,200 feet. The Period of Recent Life only now begins; its lowest rocks showing only 5 per cent. of their fossils still existing. These beds represent, in Britain, about 2,500 feet of sands, clays, grits, limestone, marls, etc. From 20 to 30 per cent. of the fossils of the next period still survive. In Britain these rocks are poorly represented, but in Switzerland a single mass of conglomerate belonging to them is 6,000 feet thick. Beds succeed with more than 50 per cent. of their fossils still surviving; a series poorly seen in the British islands, but showing a thickness of 2,000 feet in some of their single members, in Italy. The newest formations are now at length reached, in which 90 per cent. of the fossils still exist. Sands, clays, and drifts, compose these beds, which reach to the surface and end the wondrous story of the earth.[1]

It must be remembered that none of the long series of rocks thus enumerated have been formed over more than isolated portions of the earth's surface at a time. The crust has been, in fact, in a constant upheaval or depression in its different parts—the ocean of one age becoming the dry land of another; and each successive formation

[1] Hugh Miller notes (*Test. of the Rocks*, p. 14) that the order of succession of animal life in the rocks is exactly that of Cuvier. Thus:—

Geological arrangement—Radiata, Articulata, Mollusca, Fish, Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, Man.

Cuvier's „ Radiata, Articulata, Mollusca, Fish, Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, Man.

is only the wreck of others of an earlier date. The slowness of this process is self-evident from the very structure of the rocks, whether composed of the sand of earlier deposits, gently sinking to the bottom of the ocean; of chalk slowly accumulated in infinitesimal particles, perhaps in great part from the remains of shells after their occupants had died, or of the mountain masses of limestone, chemically separated, in unperceived advances, from the ocean or terrestrial waters. How long would it take to wear away the hills, and spread them out on the floor of the ocean, in the shape of gneiss, or slate, or sandstone? And when thus spread out, how long would it require to harden them into rock, and after wearing them away by ocean currents, to lift them, during a slow upheaval, often to thousands of feet above the sea, there to be still further worn down, by the rains and the elements, into hills and valleys?

But the fossils which the rocks contain are themselves an indisputable chronology. Beginning, so far as we know, with marine polypi and worms, or perhaps with coralloids, life has never since, through uncipherable ages, been wanting on our planet. As the miles of deposits were slowly thrown down on the floor of the ancient deep, film by film, the ever-deepening ooze swarmed with busy existence. Whole beds of rock, with an aggregate thickness of hundreds, if not thousands, of feet, are made up of shells, which witness by their perfect preservation how calmly the lives of their owners successively passed away. The polishing stone from Bohemia, which we know as Tripoli, is only an accumulation of the flinty coverings of organisms known as diatoms, so minute that no less than 41,000,000,000 of them go to make up a single cubic inch of stone,[1] and there

[1] Nicholson's *Manual*, vol. i. p. 23.

are similar deposits of great extent, and thirty feet in thickness, in Virginia, where the bed is known as the "Infusorial Earth."[1] The "Greensands" of the Chalk and other periods, in the same way, are found to consist in great part of the casts of minute shells from which the lime has been dissolved, a phenomenon which is being even now repeated in various parts at the bottom of existing oceans—each grain being the *cast* of a single shell.[2] It seems very probable, moreover, that some of the great clayey accumulations of past geological formations may be really the remains of minute shells. Many enormously thick beds of limestone, extending over vast spaces, are, also, simply the wreck of countless millions of similar humble forms of life. Our chalk is an example, and so is a similar deposit still being formed over large areas of the Atlantic and Pacific, at great depths, almost wholly from the debris of minute shells. Whole limestone ranges in Russia, America, and Britain, owe their origin to no more dignified a source. They are built up of the shells of Foraminifera. The petroleum so largely obtained in North America has not improbably an animal origin, and the "bituminous schists" of Caithness are impregnated with oily matter, apparently derived from the decomposition of masses of fish in them, through long periods.[3] The Nummulite[4] limestone of the Tertiary period attains a thickness of many thousand feet, and extends from the Alps to the Carpathians, while it plays a great part in the formation of mountains and hills in Asia Minor, Persia, India and Africa. Yet it is the creation of innumerable disk or money-like shells, mostly very small.

Nor is the record of dim and almost endless ages in the vegetation which the rocks embosom less striking,

[1] Nicholson's *Manual*, vol. ii. p. 430. [2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 25.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 27. [4] From Nummus, *money*, Latin.

How long, for example, let it again be asked, would it require to grow the amazing harvest of stem and leaf represented by the coal-fields met with in every part of the world—offering fuel in quantities so vast as to be inexhaustible for many ages to come, were the populations of every country in which they occur to use them? [a] Or, how long, again, would it need for the "denudations," or washing and wearing away of immense thicknesses of rock, by whatever agencies, which we see repeated at every step in the history of the earth? A single case may bring this vividly to the mind. The appearance of massive caps of Old Red Sandstone on the tops of the highest hills of Sutherland, and the occurrence of similar isolated patches at remotely separated points over a wide range of country, irresistibly point to the conclusion that these spots and fragments were at one time parts of a vast sheet of stone which lay uniformly over the entire region, from Ben Lomond to Caithness, covering the whole of the highlands of Scotland. Everywhere, the islets, and peaks, and spots, of sandstone, show marks of vast denudation. They form an insulated patch in the northern valley of the Spey; they rise at Lochness in an immense mass of conglomerate, to the height of about three thousand feet above the sea-level, and on the north-west coast of Ross-shire they form three immense insulated hills at least as high. These are well-nigh all that remain of a sheet of rocks of this vast depth, once overlying all this far-stretching tract. "I entertain little doubt," says Hugh Miller, "that when this loftier portion of Scotland, including the entire highlands, first presented its broad back over the waves, the entire surface consisted exclusively, from one extremity to the other, of a continuous tract of Old Red Sandstone, though, ere the land finally emerged, the ocean currents of ages

had swept away all, except in the lower and last raised borders, and in the detached localities where it yet remains."[1] But what period can we imagine as sufficiently long for ocean waves to wear away and carry again into the depths, a vast bed of rock stretching over a whole country to the depth of three thousand feet! If anything can help us to realize that a thousand years are with the great God as one day is to us, it is a fact like this.

That, in the main, the causes in operation around us in nature to-day, have been those prevailing in the past, seems beyond dispute. The formation of the eyes, and the structure of the teeth, and of the skeletons of fossil mollusks, fish, reptiles, birds, and quadrupeds, show a uniformity of plan in all the works of the Almighty from the beginning, while the marks of raindrops on what was once the soft sea-beach, and the structure of trees and plants, likewise prove that nature was always the same. Yet it may be readily granted that we cannot justly apply the experience of the present to the earlier periods of our earth, since the conditions were so utterly different. A world cooling from incandescence, and an atmosphere charged with dense vapour, slowly condensing into oceans, are elements in geological calculations which make existing phenomena an unsafe rule for the distant past, if pressed too far.[2] Yet with every abatement, who will say in how far back an eternity God laid the foundations of the earth? It is well by turning our thoughts at times to such revelations, to realize in some measure the exceeding greatness and majesty of Him with whom we have to do. To exalt God is to learn humility.

With these primeval ages, however extended, the narrative of creation in Genesis comes in no degree into

[1] *Old Red Sandstone*, p. 49.

[2] This is candidly admitted by Professor Green. *Geology*, p. 522.

conflict, for there is no limit set to that "beginning," in which the heavens and the earth were called into being.

With the period at which man was created it is different. The chronology of Scripture, thence, till it falls into that of profane history, has always been a difficult and much disputed question. That of the Hebrew text gives a period of 2,021 years from the creation to the journey of Abraham to Canaan; the Samaritan Pentateuch, 2,322 years; and the Greek Version, 3,507.[1]

The whole subject of numbers and dates in connection with the Old Testament is, in fact, a difficult one, partly from the fact that the sacred writers speak of descendants of a given progenitor as his sons, in accordance with Eastern custom, and partly, perhaps, from the use of letters for figures in the early manuscripts.[2] The Jews did this even after the exile, and it is not improbable that their forefathers did the same, like the Greeks, who borrowed their alphabet from the Phenicians,—a people related to the Hebrews,—and used letters for figures from the earliest times. The mistake by copyists, of letters resembling each other, while of very different numerical value, accounts for many difficulties. It would be easy, for instance, to exchange ג (3) for ז (7), or פ (80) for כ (20), or מ (40) with ס (60), or ה (5) with ת (400), or א (1) with אּ (1000). The contractions and cramped writing of existing manuscripts, indeed, often, make their correct decipherment difficult even now, and increase the liability to mistakes in copying. But how great must have been the risk of error on such minute points in the countless transcriptions of thousands of years, especially if we

[1] The Rabbinical year now in use among the Jews gives a fourth estimate; for 1880 is by it the year of the world 5640.

[2] Eichhorn's *Einleitung*, i. § 90. Winer, *Realwörterbuch*, art. Zahlen. Gesenius, *Heb. Grammar*, 20th ed. § 5.

remember that two small dots above the first nine letters raised them from units to thousands ?

Under these circumstances it is not wonderful that chronologists have produced very different reckonings in every age. In the French book, "L'Art de Verifier les Dates," no fewer than 108 opinions are given respecting the period from Adam to Christ, varying more than 2,000 years in their extremes. Des Vignolles says, indeed,[1] that he had collected 200, the highest of which reckoned the same period at 6,984 years, while in the lowest it was put at 3,483. The chronology followed in our English Bibles is that of Archbishop Usher,[2] according to which the world is now 5884 years old, but it is needless to say that the worthy Irishman would have been the last to have claimed inspiration for his estimates. One thing in their favour, however, is that Ideler, the great German scholar, accepted them with an addition of only two years up to the birth of Christ.

Various systems have at different times had great celebrity. Thus, Panodorus, an Alexandrian monk who lived about A.D. 412, fixed the year of Christ's birth as the 5493rd from the creation of the world,[3] and this reckoning was long used in the Church for the festivals of the ecclesiastical year. Two other calculations are still in use among single Christian nations. That of Anianus, an Egyptian monk, a contemporary of Panodorus, who sets Christ's birth in the year of the world 5501, is still employed by the Abyssinians. The Greek Christian races, with the exception of the Russians, on the other hand, use

[1] In the preface to his *Chronologie de l'Histoire Sainte*, quoted by Ideler.

[2] 1580–1656. Usher was Archbishop of Armagh.

[3] Ideler, *Handbuch der Chronologie*, vol. ii. p. 447. Wieseler, art. Aere, Herzog, *Real-Encyklopädie*, vol. i. p. 153.

the Constantinopolitan system, according to which the year begins on the 1st September, and Christ's birth is put in the year 5509. Julius Africanus calculated the year 5500; Eusebius, the Venerable Bede, and the Romish Martyrology, the year 5199; Scaliger and Calvisius the year 3950, and Kepler and Petavius, the year 3984, as that of the nativity. These dates, varying and arbitrary as they seem, have been, among others, the materials of which Church historians and chronologists, not only of the earlier ages, but even since the Reformation have constantly made use.[1]

To show at a glance the different ideas of the period assigned by Genesis as that of the creation of man, by these and other calculations, famous in their day, and in some cases in wide use even at present, it may be interesting to note the following table.

	From Creation to 1880
Zunz (Hebrew reckoning). . .	5868
Septuagint (Perowne) .	7241 or 7291
Rabbinical	5640
Usher	5834
Panodorus	7373
Anianus	7381[2]
Constantinopolitan . . .	7389
Eusebius	7079
Scaliger	5830
Dionysius (from whom we take *our* Christian era)	7374
Maximus	7381
Syncellus and Theophanes . .	7381
Julius Africanus.	7381
Hales.	7291
Jackson	7306

[1] The whole question of these eras of the world will be found treated with great learning in *Ideler*, vol. ii. pp. 444–470.

[2] *Wieseler:* Ideler says, 7372.

It is thus clear that it has been at all times an open question among the most orthodox theologians, whether Scripture assigned the creation of man to a nearer or remoter date.[1] Of the calculations above given, nine fix it at over 7,000 years ago, and four at from 5,600 to 5,890. There can be no ground for dogmatizing where doctors differ so strikingly, for he would be a bold man who would impugn the soundness of the worthies who offer even the highest computations quoted. Others might indeed have been added of hardly less weight, for it is not to be forgotten that two hundred different calculations, at least, exist, varying, to the present date, from 8863 years to 5362.

It is worthy of notice, moreover, that even the separate parts of Biblical calculations are differently computed by different authorities. Thus, to instance the case of the Septuagint alone, Dean Perowne[2] differs 18 and 98 years, respectively, from Bunsen, in his reckoning of the interval from the Creation to Abraham leaving Haran, while as to the numbers through the rest of the Old Testament, either in the Hebrew or the Greek, each investigator adopts his own method of analysis, and draws his own conclusions. The progress of Assyrian studies will perhaps enable future scholars to solve the difficulties which

[1] The chronology of Berosus has been thought to ascribe a length of 43,000 years to each of the ten Babylonian kings, from the *sare* being reckoned at 3,600 years. But a passage in Suidas shows that this was the astronomical *sare* and that there was another of only 18 months, used for civil purposes. According to this, the length of the ten reigns is 2,221 years, or 21 years less than the period given in the Septuagint as having elapsed between Creation and the Deluge. See Vigouroux, *La Bible et les Découvertes Modernes*, vol. i. p. 214. See also Lenormant, *Les Origines de l'Histoire* (Paris, 1880), p. 279.

[2] *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. Chronology.

have hitherto perplexed so many, by furnishing fixed periods from which to start and by which to check their results; but till this is the case, Biblical chronology will be by no means a subject on which all are united. Meanwhile it is well to remember that "the chronology given on the margin of our bibles is of no authority and of great uncertainty."[1]

[1] The Rev. Josiah Miller, M.A. *Transactions of Society of Bib. Archæol.*, vol. iv. p. 315.

(*a*) Experiments have shown that a seam of coal one yard in thickness must have required for its origin a mass of vegetable matter about $8\frac{3}{4}$ yards in thickness. To produce a bed of coal 10 yards thick, such as occurs in England, the peaty mass must have attained, before the vegetable growth ceased and the superincumbent layer of earthy matter was spread upon it, a thickness of about 87 yards,

CHAPTER VII.

ADAM AND EVE.

THE few verses in which Scripture speaks of our first parents leave so much untold, that a natural curiosity has, in all ages, wearied itself by filling up the outline as fancy prompted. The name Adam, which is applied to both the man and the woman, seems to imply that they were of a reddish colour rather than white, like ourselves; but even this is doubtful, for the allusion may be simply to the fact of their creation from the dust of the ground,—the redness referring simply to that of the general colour of soil, as we often speak of the brown or red furrows of the plough.[1]

Adam can hardly be called a distinctive name given to our first parent individually. It is rather a title of honour given him as the progenitor of the race, for it is constantly used in the Bible, of mankind at large, as Man. While, however, no name but that of The Man has come down to us as that of our great father, the name of Eve, borne by the mother of us all, was most fitly given, meaning, as it does, simply, Life. It is characteristic of the earnest and grave view of things peculiar to the Hebrews, that the first man bears a name reminding us all of our lowliness and mortality, rather than alluding to our superiority

[1] Mühlau and Volck. *Heb. Handwörterbuch*, p. 13.

to other creatures. In our own language the word man means "the thinking being;"[1] in the Greek, anthrōpos means "the upward looking one," or, according to modern philologers, "the being of the noble countenance;" while the Latin "homo," long thought to be derived from "humus," "the ground," is now held to mean the "speaking one." The Hebrew is contented to think of our race as "him who sprang from the dust."[2]

The speculations and fancies in which many have indulged respecting our first parents, have been too often as fanciful as they are idle. Thus the Rabbis tell us that his height was so great he could see from one end of the world to the other, and that, when he lay down, his head and his feet were so far apart that it would have taken five hundred years to walk from the one to the other. They add, however, that when he sinned, God "laid His hand upon him,"[3] and reduced him to the more moderate stature of a hundred and fifty feet. This, indeed, was a signal mercy, for till then his heel had eclipsed the sun, so that the creatures, and even the angels, mistook him for God, and would have worshipped him had not he checked them.

Some, however, maintain that even after he had sinned,

[1] From Sanscrit *mna*, "to think." It is also the same in modern Tahitian.

[2] The Phenician Cosmogony speaks of the first man, "Adam Qadmun," as created from the earth. So do Libyan traditions. In Egypt he was thought to have been made of the mud of the Nile. Even in Peru and North America the Indians held the same opinion of our being at first made from the dust. The ancient Chaldeans called the first man "him whom the earth produced." So widely spread have been the echoes of the Bible narrative. Lenormant, *Les Origines de l'Histoire*, pp. 39–41.

[3] Ps. cxxxix. 5. Perhaps these exaggerations had a metaphorical meaning. See *Sagen der Ebräer* (Hurwitz), p. xvii.

he was so gigantic that, having to cross the ocean after being driven from Paradise, he waded safely to land, like Orion or Polyphemus in Virgil, his shoulders or even half his body above the flood.[1]

His physical beauty is the subject of wild inventions. God, it is said, wishing to create him, clothed Himself in a perfect human body, that He might have a pattern from which to make him literally in His own image. Indeed, not only the Rabbis, but Christian writers have played with this fancy, asserting that it was the Word, the Second Person in the Trinity, who thus assumed a human form, and that the body thus taken was that seen by St. Peter on Tabor at the transfiguration, and by Moses on Mount Sinai.

Even the dust of which our first parent was made has engaged the speculations of many. It was gathered, say the Rabbis, from every part of the world: that of the body from Babel, that for the head from Palestine, and that for the limbs from all other countries.[2] Many Rabbis have even fancied that Adam and Eve were originally created with one body between them, the two heads turned back to back, Eve being afterwards separated, and presented to Adam as his wife.[3]

As to knowledge, our first parent has been supposed

[1] Virgil, *Æn.*, x. 763; iii. 655.

[2] Bayle's *Dictionnaire*, art. Adam.

[3] *Ibid.* Lenormant quotes a number of ancient traditions which illustrate in various fanciful ways the Bible statement of the derivation of man and woman from one original. He himself thinks that the Hebrew text means that Eve was formed *at* Adam's side, not *from* it. It is at least striking that Jewish and, one may say, universal tradition favours this idea. *Les Origines de l'Histoire*, pp. 51–55. Brentano's *Bible*, i. 16. Baring Gould's curious book, *Legends of Old Test. Characters*, has many additional fancies in the same strain.

by such dreamers to have excelled all men since. It was a favourite mode of stating this, among Christian writers before the Reformation, to say, that the great master Aristotle was almost as learned as Adam. But the Rabbis have gone further; for, not content with comparing him with Moses and Solomon, to whom they ascribed more than human attainments, they maintain that he knew more than the angels. These glorious beings, they tell us, having shown a disposition to look down on the new human creature when he was first made, God told them that he was of higher intelligence than they. To prove this, having summoned all the lower animals, He asked the angels to give them appropriate names, a task they owned to be beyond their powers. Adam, however, on being invited to undertake it, at once did so, and even gave to God the name Jehovah. This vast knowledge and intellect is cleverly made by the later Rabbis the explanation of the saying of their predecessors, that Adam's stature was so enormous. It was meant, they say, of his intellectual greatness.

This vast mental equipment was derived, we are told, from a book sent down from heaven, containing six hundred and seventy writings, which put the one thousand five hundred keys of knowledge, kept from the angels, into Adam's hands. But when he sinned, this book flew up to heaven, and poor Adam, beating his brow and weeping sore, rushed into the river Gihon up to his neck, coming out a rusty red!

His stay in Paradise is spoken of as only a single day. In the first hour, the dust of which he was formed was brought together; in the second, it was made into a shapeless mass; in the third, his limbs were stretched out; in the fourth, his soul was put in him; in the fifth he stood on his feet; in the sixth, he gave all things and

creatures their names; in the seventh, Eve was created; in the eighth, Cain and a sister were born; in the ninth, Adam was told not to eat the forbidden fruit; in the tenth, he sinned; in the eleventh, he was pardoned; and in the twelfth, he was driven out of Paradise.[1]

St. Jerome supposed that our first parent was buried at Hebron; but this did not please the fancy of the day, which clung to the earlier idea that he was laid to rest on Mount Calvary. This was, indeed, the view of most of the Fathers. "Here," says Tertullian, "we maintain the first man was buried; here Christ suffered; here He moistened the earth with His holy blood; that the dust of Adam, mingled with the blood of Christ, might be washed pure by the virtues of the dropping stream."[2]

It was early urged, as a difficulty in receiving this beautiful legend, that the waters of the Flood must have obliterated all traces of our great forefather's grave. But invention was fertile. Already in the fourth century the teacher of St. Ephrem explained to that saint at Edessa, that at the time of the Deluge Noah lived in Syria; that he planted in the plains of Sodom the cedars of which the ark was to be built; that he carried with him in the ark the bones of Adam; and that when the flood subsided he divided them among his three sons, giving the skull to Shem, whose descendants, having received Judea as their inheritance, buried the sacred relic on Calvary, where the tomb had formerly been.[3]

Some of the most eminent of the Fathers held that Adam was one of the first raised from the dead with our Lord; and the Rabbis have a touching legend that he would have died of sorrow after his sin had not God sent an angel to console him.

[1] Eisenmenger's *Judenthum Entdecktes*, vol. i. p. 635.
[2] *Carm. cont. Marcion.*, c. 4.
[3] *Cornelius a Lapide, In Genesin*, c. ii. v. 9.

Cornelius a Lapide adds the strange invention, that Seth, at the command of an angel, put a seed of the forbidden tree into the mouth of Adam at his burial, and that a tree grew from it which afterwards furnished the wood of our Saviour's cross; so that the very tree which had led to the Fall became the instrument of our redemption. The Jews, however, have a legend from which this is evidently borrowed; that the angels bore to Adam, in the desert, a branch of the tree of life which Seth forthwith planted. This grew to a lordly size, and in after ages supplied the rod of Moses, the branch which sweetened the bitter waters of Marah, and the pole on which the brazen serpent was raised.

The question must often rise, what was the religious belief of our first parents? and on this subject Jewish writers, whose study of the ancient Scriptures has been more intense than that of any others, are, perhaps, best entitled to speak. According to Dr. Beer, a learned German Rabbi, the first ten chapters of Genesis, when read without prejudice and with eyes open to the truth, supply the answer, which is summed up in the following particulars:—

Adam, he thinks, must have held: 1. That God alone created the universe; that He existed, of necessity, before creation, and must exist for ever without change, which would imply that He is Immaterial and Eternal.

2. That harmony prevails throughout creation, each part fitting like the wheels of a watch into the whole design, and working with every other, to bring about the one great end, of universal perfection, happiness, and peace. Hence, Adam must have realized that the great Master of the Whole was One, Only, and Allwise.

3. That this Great Being made the world from nothing; that the existence of all creatures depends

absolutely on His will; that He interrupts the course of nature, that is, works miracles, when He thinks fit, and that He is, therefore, Supreme and Almighty.

4. That all that has been or is owes its first source to Him, and has been and is upheld directly by Him—that is, He is Omnipresent.

5. That He created man, as to his soul, in His own image: that is, spiritual, free, and immortal. Hence He must love virtue and hate vice, or in other words, He must be a Holy God.

6. That the lot of man is often felt to correspond with his conduct, thus showing the Righteousness of God. But, the fact that this is not always realized here, is an absolute proof that our conduct and our lot will be brought, hereafter, to correspond. Hence Adam must have believed in a Future State.

7. That God watches, with an all-embracing Providence, over all things; especially over man at large, and each individual in particular, and thus must be All Good.

8. That man is weak, and wrought upon by impulses from within and temptations from without. That when he sins God pardons him, on his seeing and repenting of his faults. Thus Adam must have believed in the Tender Pity and Mercy of the Heavenly Father.

9. That God demands, not on His own account, for He is high above all wants, but for the good of man himself, our homage and obedience to His Sovereign will, not only in the most secret thoughts, but also outwardly; and that He has hence given us Commands and Prohibitions—some of abiding force, others for particular circumstance and times."[1]

The Christian naturally adds to this simple creed a

[1] Beer: *Geschichte, Lehren, und Meinungen der Juden* (1820), vol. i. pp. 12 ff.

trust in the mysterious promise of a future Deliverer—the Seed of the Woman, who should bruise the head of the serpent, and undo the ruin of the Fall. It may have been that the wondrous grace thus foreshadowed was perceived only very imperfectly; but on the other hand, the same heavenly pity that gave the consolation perhaps revealed its Divine completeness. It is impossible, indeed, to conjecture how much may have been disclosed to one who stood in such unique relations to his Maker.

It might have been expected that we should find some account of the creation of Man in the Assyrian legends, but unfortunately those which seem to refer to it are sadly mutilated. Mr. George Smith believed that he could recognise in them a discourse of God to the first man and the first woman on their duties, and exhortations to innocence and purity, but the sense is difficult to make sure. The name of the man, strange to say, is Admu, or Adamu, the Assyrian form of the Hebrew Adam;[1] which Sir Henry Rawlinson regards as designating the "brown race" in opposition to Sarku "the clear or fair." In the Egyptian records the god Chnumis makes man of clay, on a potter's wheel.[2] Other fancies, however, made the four races of men, exclusive of the negro, spring from the tears of Horus, and the work of the goddess Sekhet,—a personification of the eye of Horus, or the sun. But still other inventions ascribe man as sprung from the eye, and the gods from the mouth of that deity.[3]

The story of our First Parents has furnished a theme for poets from the earliest ages. Victor, a rhetorician of Marseilles, so long ago as the middle of the fifth century,

[1] Delitzsch, *Chald. Gen.*, p. 304. Lenormant, *Origines*, p. 47.
[2] Chabas: *Études*, p. 87.
[3] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.* vol. iv. p. 45. Vigouroux: *La Bible et Les Découvertes Modernes*, vol. i. p. 188.

composed a metrical paraphrase on Genesis, one passage of which, relating to the Fall, is curious. Adam and Eve, having sinned, and having been driven from Paradise, are humbly praying, when, suddenly, the hated serpent is seen gliding past. The ruined pair start at the sight, indignant at the presence of the cause of all their misery. Eve is the first to speak. Adam, if the sight of the author of their sorrows moves him, should, she thinks, snatch one of the stones, which lie thick around, and destroy the source of their own ruin. Nor is he unwilling. He would fain let that which had brought death on them know how sad a thing it is to die, and follows it with a shower of stones; Eve, also, hurling as many as she can, while it glides off. But one stone, sharp edged, strikes on a flinty rock and a spark leaps forth, and catches in the dry leaves around. Presently it leaps from leaves to shrubs, and, ere long, the whole wood around is in flames.

At such a catastrophe our first parents flee terrified, but, soon, overawed by the terrible spectacle, they stop to gaze on a scene so strange to them. Wondering, they see the thick foliage stript from the now bare slopes, and the grove heaped with embers. The sun is obscured by smoke, but the whole landscape is lighted up by the new brightness. Great globes of fire are carried off from the growing trees by the wind, and the flames eat deep to the roots. There, the heat reaches the rich veins, which presently melt and pour out streams of metal. Gold sparkles and glows in its yellow course; silver flows forth shining like milk, and copper winds along, limpid as water.[1]

After a time the wild storm of fire passes and things resume their wonted course, but the chance spark has

[1] C. M. Victoris, *Super Genesin Comment.*, given by Fabricius in his *Corpus Poetarum Ecclesiasticorum.* (1572. Basileæ.)

revealed to man the two great discoveries of fire and of the metals.

But a greater poet than Victor has given us, in our own language, though before it had become our modern English, an imaginative picture of the first days of mankind. Cædmon, an Anglo-Saxon, or rather Englishman, born towards the close of the seventh century, a tenant on the lands of the abbey of Whitby, and a convert to Christianity, in his metrical paraphrase of parts of Holy Scripture, has left us the legacy of a true poet. He sings of the Creation, the War in Heaven, the fall of Satan, and of his counsellings in Hell, as the strong Angel of Presumption or Pride.

The poem is so curious and in many respects so noble, that a brief glance at the leading ideas of the part of it referring to our First Parents, may be of interest. It opens with an ascription of praise to the Almighty, the glorious Lord of Hosts. In the beginning He ruled the heavens. The angels, when created, surrounded Him, bright and full of bliss as their Great Original, because sinless. But after a time their guardian "for pride, sank into error," and "turned away from the love of God." He and those who followed him thought they could divide the heavens against God. Satan proposed to seize a home in the north and make it the lofty seat of a new empire under himself. But God was wroth at his presumption, and having prepared a place of punishment for these false ones, took away their courage and drove them out of heaven.

> Their vaunt was quelled; their threat shattered;
> Their grandeur bowed; their beauty corrupted,
> For that they had devised 'gainst God to war.

Peace now, once more, reigned in heaven, but the home of the rebel angels was vacant, and God pondered how

He might create a better race. The earth as yet lay waste.

> There had not here, as yet, save cavern shade,
> Aught been. The wide abyss stood, deep and dark.

The earth lay like

> A dark cloud, lowering in eternal night,
> Swart under heaven, both dark and waste.
> The ocean, shrouded with eternal night,
> Stretched far and wide.

Then went forth the guardian Spirit of Heaven, bright with the upper glory, and passed over the deep with utmost speed, and the Creator of angels bade the "holy light" come forth over its spacious bosom, and was presently obeyed. The firmament, "the roof of nations," He next "hove up from the earth by His own word."

> Then came o'er earth, swift journeying,
> The third great morn.

Here, unfortunately, there is a break, after which an account of the creation of woman is given, that of man being apparently lost.

> Adam was fast at rest and softly slept.
> He knew not pain and had no suffering,
> Nor from his wounds flowed any blood.
> But from his side the Lord of angels
> Drew forth a jointed bone: he, yet, unwounded;
> And of it formed a goodly woman.

Paradise, the home of the new pair, is thus described:—

> It stood good and spiritual, filled with gifts.
> Fair washed the general land both running water
> And welling brooks. No clouds, as yet,
> Over the ample ground bore rains,
> Lowering with winds.
> Yet with all fruits earth stood adorned.

The poet now returns to the rebellion of Satan, and passes on to his plot against man. Glorious as "the light of stars," "he rebelled—sought speech of hate and words of pride, nor would serve God." Summoning his hosts, he thus addressed them :—

"Wherefore shall I toil?
No need have I of master. I can work
With my own hands great marvels, and have power
To build a throne more worthy of a god,
Higher in heaven. Why shall I, for His smile,
Serve Him and bow me thus in vassalage?
I may be God as He.
Stand by me, strong supporters, firm in strife.
Hard-mooded heroes, famous warriors,
Have chosen me for Chief: one may take thought
With such, for counsel, and, with such, secure
Large following. My friends in earnest they,
Faithful in all the shaping of their minds;
I am their master, and may rule this realm.

Then comes the fall from heaven.

The fiend, with all his host, fell, then,
Long as three days and nights, from heaven to hell.

There each of all the fiends, each night—
A night immeasurably long—have a renewal
Of their fierce penal fires: then, before dawn,
The Eastern wind brings frost, and bitter cold.

With a striking similarity of treatment to that of Milton, a thousand years later, Satan is now introduced, addressing his followers in hell.

Then spake the haughty king, of angels
Erst the brightest. He had shone white in heaven
Till his soul urged, and, most of all, his pride,
That to the word of God, the Lord of Hosts,
He should not bend. About his heart, his soul

Tumultuously heaved, hot pains of wrath
Flamed round him.
Then spake he: "This narrow place is most unlike
That other we once knew, high in the heavens,
Which my Lord gave me, though, therein no more
For the Almighty we hold royalties.
Yet right He hath not done in striking us
Down to the fiery bottom of hot hell—
And having stripped us of heaven's kingdom,
To decree that He will set in it the race of man.
Worst of my sorrows this, that earth-born Adam
My strong seat shall possess, and reign in joy,
While we endure this torment.
Oh! had I but the freedom of my hands
Or could I be without for but one season—
One winter's space—with this host, I——
But iron binds me round: this coil of chains
Lies heavy on me. I, now, rule no more—
Close bonds of hell hold me their prisoner.

* * * *

God hath now devised a world and has made man
In His own likeness, that by him
He may repeople heaven with holy spirits,
To take our place.
Therefore we must strive zealously
That we on Adam, if we ever may,
And on his offspring, all our wrongs repair.
If we can but corrupt them, God will cast them down
To hell, and they will be our vassals here.
Think, all of you, how best you may deceive them.
He who shall that effect, for him
Shall recompense eternal be the meed,
So far as in this fire, henceforth,
Advantages may rise.
Him will I let sit by myself.

He who is known to us as Satan forthwith volunteers, and is girt in full panoply for the mission, by the great chief himself.

Wheeling up from thence,
He parted through the doors of hell.
Lion-like in air,—in hostile mood
Dashing the fire aside with a fiend's power.

Reaching Eden, "he many speeches knew of grateful words." Making for the two trees of life and death—the former fair and beautiful: the latter "utterly black, dim, and dark," he "cast him into a worm's body, and twining about the tree of death, took of its fruits." Bearing these, he forthwith went in search of Eve, and addressed her as a special messenger from God.

"Tell Adam," said he, "God has sent me as His vassal,
To tell him he should eat this fruit,
To increase his understanding, power, and strength;
To make his body shine like that of angels, and
His form more beauteous. He will need no treasure else
In the whole world."

Adam, however, repels the temptation. God has Himself spoken. He does not know this being. He is not like an angel, and has given no proof that God has really sent him. For himself, he trusts in God, who needs to send no vassal. Disappointed in Adam, the emissary turns again to Eve, and warns her that God will resent this refusal to obey His order, but if she eat, she will grow wise, and learn how to meet the emergency and ward off the punishment. Her eyes will be made so clear that they will see even to the Throne of God, and she will be able to win over Adam from his fatal disobedience to the Divine message, especially if both she and he—the Tempter—press him. If she do this, he will hide from God the slanders Adam has spoken of Him—that "he was not God's angel," that he was "untruthful," and the like.

At last, "her weaker mind began to yield," in spite

of the words of God, and she takes the fruit from the Tempter, who now sends her to Adam. If she get him to eat it, she will save him from the punishment of his having refused to listen to God's messenger. She tastes some before her husband; tells him how sweet it is—how mild—and how her eyes are opened so strangely that she sees "from hence to where God sits, with bliss encircled,"

> "I see His angels compass Him with feathery wings,
> And hear the gladness of the firmament."

All day she urges Adam, Satan following to excite and urge him, till at last "even in the man the mind began to turn." Beguiled by so much temptation, he comes to think the messenger may be really sent of God, and so

> He from his wife took hell and death.—
> Then laughed the bitter-purposed messenger.
> He had won honour in hell: God's goodness counter-worked:
> Filled hell with slaves.

And now "he turns him downwards" to the broad flames—the roofs of hell—where lay his master, bound in fetters.

The light that had charmed Eve fades away as the Tempter leaves. Both she and Adam feel that they have sinned. She, penitent-minded, "wept," and "sometimes to prayer they fell together."

In hell there is great rejoicing. Satan need no longer bear sorrow in his breast, though he lies bound. The children of men must needs lose heaven, and must revert to him, here, in the flames, and not to God. "All our evils are avenged."

Meanwhile, Adam and Eve "spake many words of care together." "Eve had brought about their ruin.

Did she not hear the swart hell raging. The realm of heaven was most unlike that flame. Well may they sorrow for his journey."

> "Hunger and thirst now tear me—heat and cold.
> How shall I bear them? See, I stand here, bare,
> With garment unprotected."

It almost "rues him" that God had created Eve. Her answer is meekness itself.

> "Thou mayest reproach me with thy words,
> Adam, my loved one, but thou canst not rue
> Worse in thy mind than I do in my heart."

Adam's one thought is now to know the will of the All-Powerful One, and what penalty would be imposed. Were he told to wade in the sea, he would do it.

> "It were not so fearfully deep, nor yet
> Its stream so fearfully great, but I would go
> To the abyss, God's will to execute."

He was willing to undergo any atonement, now he had forfeited the favour of his Lord. "But we, thus bare, must now not be together." They both depart, and "sorrowing went, into the greenwood," sitting apart, to await the mandates of heaven's King. Then their bodies they bedecked with leaves, and now join in prayer. "Every morn" they besought the Lord, not to forget them, and that He would show them how they should henceforth live.

> Then came, walking, the Lord Almighty,
> After midday, in Paradise.

Adam and Eve, "sad-minded," under the tree-shade, "of happiness bereft," retire, and hide themselves in a cavern, but the voice of God calls them. Adam owns his guilt. A criminal, his sin is painful to him, and he

dare not come before the Lord—"he is all naked." The words of Scripture are then paraphrased, and in the end Adam is told,

> "Thou shalt another country seek—a dwelling place
> Less joyous far—naked and poor—of Eden's bliss bereft.
> To thee a parting is decreed of body and soul.
> Thou shalt bear a sweaty countenance
> While here thou livest, till, at last,
> With thee, at heart, shall grapple fell disease."

But while they were driven from Paradise

> Yet continued still the roof of holy stars,
> And all earth's riches God them amply gave.

This is a brief abstract of the first section of a poem remarkable not only for its force of invention, but as among the earliest creations of English poetry.

Many poets, besides, have in different ages, made our First Parents their theme, but there are few passages in any which equal in beauty of expression or of fancy that in which James Montgomery, in his "World Before the Flood," imagines their last moments.

The Rabbis have given Adam a place in heaven, at its gate, among the penitent, but it was left to a Christian poet to throw over his memory the soft charm of such an incident as is sketched in the lines that follow. The night is so wild and stormy that to Enoch, who speaks, it seemed as if "the world itself would perish with our Sire." The Patriarch tells how, in his last moments, Adam

> Closed his eyelids with a tranquil smile,
> And seemed to rest in silent prayer awhile:
> Around his couch with filial awe we kneeled,
> When suddenly a light from heaven revealed
> A Spirit, that stood within the unopened door;—
> The sword of God in His right hand He bore;

His countenance was lightning, and His vest
Like snow at sunrise on the mountain's crest;
Yet so benignly beautiful His form,
His presence stilled the fury of the storm;
At once the winds retire, the waters cease;
His look was love, His salutation, Peace!

Our Mother first beheld Him, sore amazed,
But terror grew to transport as she gazed:
—'Tis He, the Prince of Seraphim, who drove
Our banished feet from Eden's happy grove;
"Adam, my life, my spouse, awake!" she cried,
"Return to Paradise, behold thy Guide,—
Oh, let me follow in this dear embrace!"—
She sank, and on his bosom hid her face.
Adam looked up: his visage changed its hue,
Transformed into an angel's at the view;
"I come," he cried, "with faith's full triumph fired,"
And in a sigh of ecstasy expired.[1]

To make the conception perfect it needed only the additional touch, which is added, that Eve dies on her husband's breast, and the two thus enter the heavenly Paradise together.

[1] James Montgomery's *World Before the Flood*, Cant. 4.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STORY OF EDEN.

NO subject has been more earnestly or more largely discussed than the locality intended by Moses in his account of the residence of our first parents. Eden—"the delightsome place"—has been sought not only in every part of the world, but even outside it, for from the second to the tenth century, not a few of the Fathers, and after them others, held that it was the same as the Paradise of which the New Testament speaks, and lay in secret remoteness, half on the earth and half in heaven.

These fond dreamers could not think of any spot of the known earth, now so corrupt, as fit for the abode of primal innocence, and being fettered by no geographical difficulties, sought it in the mysterious spaces of the great Western Ocean. Far in the depths of that vast unknown sea, it was fancied, lay a country in which man had dwelt at first, but which he had left, for the lands on this side of the great waters, after the Flood. In that happy region rose a mountain, in three giant steps, high into the heavens; so high, indeed, that the waters of the Flood, at their full, washed only its base, when all other mountains were sunk beneath them. All kinds of wondrous plants, metals, and precious stones combined to enrich it, but its greatest glory was in its river, the waters of which lost their

heavenly taste only when they had reached the surface of our earth. A single stream flowed from under the throne of God into its gardens,—the choicest of which lay on the highest part of the mountain, towards the east,—and there divided itself into four, which, after watering the whole mountain, disappeared into the ground and flowed beneath hell, the ocean, and the earth, to reappear as the Euphrates and Tigris in Armenia, and as the Nile in Ethiopia. Others fancied that the three great rivers thus welling up from the subterranean waters of Paradise were the Euphrates, the Indus, and the European Danube. The Indus, however, was believed to be only the Nile, for it was supposed that it flowed round the Persian Gulf, and northwards through Ethiopia as the great Egyptian river.[1] Some, for the Danube substituted the Ganges, and others, in the end, came to think that, after all, Eden must be in the East, but that it lay there shut in behind terrible mountains which no mortal foot had ever crossed.

In the later Jewish times and early ages of Christianity, a similarly unrestricted play had been left to invention. It was only needed to put Eden in the farthest north or east, and no one could disprove it. The writer of the Book of Enoch[2] relates how "as he looked towards the north, over the mountains, he saw seven mountains full of precious balsam and odorous trees, and cinnamon and pepper. From thence I went over the summits of these mountains far towards the east, and passed on still farther over the sea, and came far beyond it. And I came into the garden of righteousness, and saw a many coloured crowd of trees of every kind, for many and great trees flourish there, very noble and lovely, and the tree of wisdom, which gives wisdom to any one who eats of it. It is like the Johannis bread tree; its fruit is like a cluster

[1] Calvin, *On Genesis.* [2] Kap. 32.

of grapes, very good; and the fragrance of the tree spreads far around. And I said, 'Fair is this tree, and how beautiful and ravishing its look!' And the holy angel Raphael, who was with me, answered and said to me, 'This is the tree of wisdom of which thy forefathers, thy hoary first parent, and thy aged first mother ate, and found the knowledge of wisdom, and their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and were driven out of the garden.'" Josephus is less extravagant in his locality, but equally singular in his geography. "The garden," says he,[1] "was watered by one river which ran round about the whole earth, and was divided into four streams. And Pison (the first stream), which means 'a multitude,' running into India, falls into the sea, and is called Ganges by the Greeks. The Euphrates and the Tigris[2] run into the Erythræan Sea, and Gihon runs through Egypt, and means 'what rises in the east,' which the Greeks call the Nile." Fancies as vague prevailed till comparatively modern times, but they necessarily fell into disrepute as intelligence awoke and knowledge increased. Luther believed it impossible ever to discover the true locality. "Paradise, shut at first by the sin of man, has since been so utterly wasted and overwhelmed by the flood that no trace of it remains." Calvin, on the other hand, would on no account grant this, and maintained that the world was the same as was created at first: adding that "Moses, indeed, in his opinion, accommodated his topography to the comprehension of his age."

[1] *Antiq.*, i. 1, 3.

[2] There has never been any dispute as to these two rivers being meant. Pĕrath (the sweet waters) is simply the old Assyrian name Purat. In old Persian it is Ufratu, "the fair flowing river." Hiddekel is the same word as Hidiglat, a name for the Tigris, in the Assyrian inscriptions. It means "the arrow-swift."

Paradise, the Reformer fancied, must have been between the east and Judæa, and indeed in Southern Mesopotamia, where he fixed it, in a map prefixed to his Commentary.

Luther's opinion, however, became the more popular; for though it was hard to give up attempts to decide the locality of Eden, his idea of changes since brought about on the earth's surface offered a ready escape from any difficulties. It was hard, indeed, to believe that the Euphrates and Tigris, the Indus and the Ganges, or the Indus and the Oxus, or the Ganges and the Nile, had ever sprung from one parent stream, but attempts were made to explain the Gihon and the Pison so as to bring them closer together. They were identified by Reland[1] as the Araxes, which falls into the Caspian, and the Phasis, which flows into the Black Sea; but as this placed Eden on the barren mountains of Armenia, various modifications of his views have since been made. They still, however, influence the investigations of not a few.

It would be wearisome to quote at length the widely contrasted opinions which offer themselves in the long list of writings more or less fully devoted to this subject, for it embraces not fewer than eighty treatises. Palestine, Syria, Armenia, Mesopotamia, Persia, the Delta of the Indus, Cashmere, one of the South Sea Islands, the Canary Islands, St. Gothard in the Alps, and even the shores of the Baltic, have been zealously advocated as the seat of Paradise.

The most recent discussions are as widely opposed as those of former times. Dillmann,[2] an eminent critic, for example, after defining the meaning of the names Pison and Gihon as "the broad-flowing," and the "breaker-forth," thinks that even names so little distinguishing

[1] A great Dutch theologian, born 1676, died 1718.

[2] Art. Eden, Schenkel's *Bib. Lexicon*, vol. ii. p. 44.

leave less difficulty than might be expected in understanding to what they refer. Kusch, he goes on to say, is always, in the Old Testament, the name for the most southern lands and races of the then known earth, whether in the narrower sense of African Ethiopia, or as including the part of Asia to which also that name was given. Havilah is mentioned as a Kushite tribe on the southern coast of the Red Sea, and also as a tribe sprung from Joktan, on the Persian Gulf, and occurs along with Saba and Ophir. Even Judea may be supposed to be meant from the products mentioned.[1] Pison and Gihon can hardly be any other than the Ganges and the Indus. The seat of Eden must therefore, in his opinion, be represented as at the Himalaya Mountains in Northern India, though the vast distance between the Mesopotamian rivers and those of Hindostan make it hard to think how the four could have been fancied as springing from one head. Professors Maspero[2] and Renan[3] tell us very positively that the moderns have suceeded in determining the site more exactly than the ancients. They have placed it in the mountains of Bolor (Belourtagh), not far from the point where that chain joins the Himalaya, on the plateau of Pamir. This would place Eden on the other—northern—side of the stupendous range of the Hindoo Koosh mountains, straight north from Peshawur, and east of Bokhara, on a plateau known as the Roof of the World, from its great elevation.

[1] The bdellium of Havilah is supposed by Rosenmüller (*Handbuch Bib. Alt.*) to mean pearls. Mühlau and Volck, and Fürst, suppose it to have been an odorous resin or gum of a tree growing in Arabia, Media, and India. On the other hand, Lefmann (*Gesch. des Alten Indiens*, p. 1) compares the Hebrew word Bedolah, spelt by him Bedora, with the Sansc. Vadara = the cotton plant.

[2] *Histoire Ancienne* (1876), p. 133.

[3] *Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques* (3rd ed.), pp. 476–490.

Ebers,[1] another distinguished critic, finds the Gihon in the Nile, which, he tells us, is still called Keōn by the Copts, and Gihon by the Abyssinians. But he adds that the name was given to many rivers by the dwellers on their banks, to flatter themselves with the belief that they lived in the seat of Paradise. Gihon, he thinks, was, also, the Ganges, which was still supposed to be one with the Nile, in the days of Alexander the Great.[2] In the same way the Euphrates was imagined by many in the second century after Christ to join the Nile,[3] and, even in the sixth century, the monk Cosmas,[4] the great geographical authority of the Middle Ages, makes the Ganges and the Nile one stream.[5] The difficulties thus raised are to Ebers so great that he ends by saying, "We entirely agree with Delitzsch, that 'Paradise is lost,' and the four streams are on this account a riddle which cries, 'Where was Paradise?' the question remaining without an answer."

[1] *Ægypten und die Bücher Mose's*, pp. 29 ff.; Ges. *Thes.*, p. 282.

[2] *Arrian*, vi. 1. "Alexander, seeing crocodiles on the Indus, thought he had found the source of the Nile, fancying that it rose in India, and lost the name of Indus from flowing through the desert."

[3] *Pausanias*, ii. v. 2.

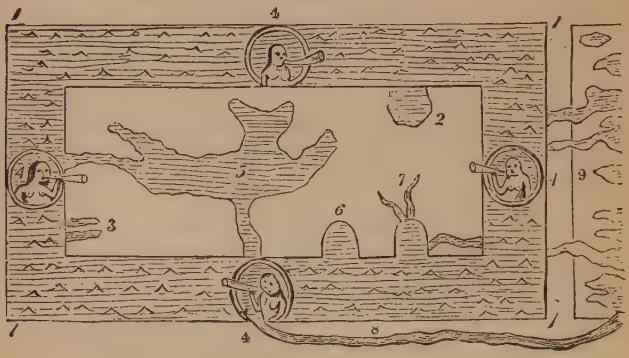
[4] An Alexandrian monk of the 6th century. He visited many countries in Asia and Africa. The science of his day may be judged from his maintaining that the earth was of a long narrow rectangular shape, surrounded by a high wall, and that towards the North Pole were high mountains, round which the sun, planets, and stars revolved. If this was the knowledge of the universe in his time, what must it have been 2,000 years before.

[5] Homer's idea of the world is seen in the lines, *Iliad*, xxi 195–197.

> The ocean,
> From which all the rivers, and all the seas,
> And all the streams and springing brooks flow forth.

The ocean was, in fact, supposed to flow round the earth.

Undismayed by so many failures and by so many different theories, Sir Henry Rawlinson has within a few years back advanced a new view, with great confidence in its correctness. He tells us that the "Gan Eden," in which the Hebrews place, "the Garden of Eden," was in reality the national name of the province of Babylon, and that the four rivers watering it are two branches of the Tigris and of the Euphrates, which are often used in the



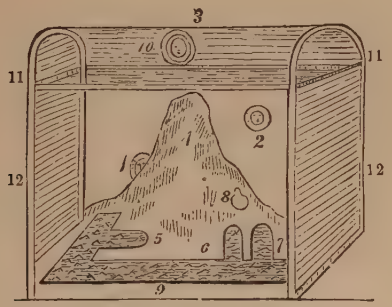
MAP OF THE WORLD BY COSMAS, "THE MAN WHO SAILED TO INDIA." MIDDLE OF 6TH CENTURY. FROM THE ORIGINAL PRINT IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

1. The great ocean surrounding the whole earth.
2. The Caspian Sea.
3. The river Pison.
4. The four great winds.
5. The Mediterranean.
6. The Red Sea.
7. The Persian Gulf, with the rivers Tigris, Euphrates, and part of the river Gihon.
8. The river Gihon (joined to the Nile).
9. The sources of the rivers and ocean.

inscriptions, to describe the region, when its streams are to be mentioned.[1] Pressel, also, an accomplished scholar, has lately advanced once more, with great confidence, in a long monogram,[2] the view of Calvin, which has had many other supporters since, that Eden lay in the district

[1] *Journal of Asiatic Soc.* (*Annual Report*, 1869), pp. xxiii. xxiv.
[2] *Paradies.* Herzog, vol. v. xx. pp. 332–377.

on the Persian Gulf, where the Euphrates and Tigris unite to form the stream known as the Schatt el Arab. Calvin fancied the Pison and Gihon to have been the two mouths of this river; but it is a question whether they are both of ancient date. Pressel adopts a modification of this theory,[1] which he urges with remarkable acuteness. The Pison and Gihon, in his opinion, are the two eastern tributaries of the Schatt el Arab, the Karun and the Kertha. To get the "four heads," he supposes the



THE HEAVENS AND EARTH OF COSMAS.

1. The setting sun.
2. The rising sun.
3. The arch of the heavens.
4. The mountain which receives the rising and setting sun.
5. The Mediterranean.
6. The Red Sea.
7. The Persian Gulf.
8. The Garden of Eden.
9. Part of the great ocean which flows round all the world.
10. The Creator surveying His works.
11. The firmament, dividing and supporting the upper waters.
12. The heavens at each side of the earth.

describer as ascending the Euphrates, and thus meeting, first, these two waters entering it, and then the central channel dividing into the Tigris and Euphrates. Settlers always ascend rivers from the sea, he tells us,

[1] It was first advanced by Rask, in Illgen's *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie*, vol. vi. pp. 94 ff.

and those from whom, first Abraham and then Moses derived the tradition, must have done so. The word Pison, he adds, means the Leaper,[1] and this exactly suits the Karun, which rushes step by step from four different mountain levels, and thus may well be called the Cataract Stream. The word Gihon he agrees with Dillmann in translating the Breaker-through, and finds it precisely indicating the characteristics of the Kertha, which "breaks through the mountains and descents of Laristan by wild clefts and cross valleys with a thousand windings." The four regions named in the Mosaic account, Eden, Havilah, Ethiopia or Kusch, and Assyria, are all found in the vicinity of this district. Kusch is identified with the present Khuzistan, which borders the Schatt el Arab, and is watered by both the Karun and the Kertha. He says, with great force, that though the name Cush was doubtless applied in after ages to the regions south of Egypt and to Arabia, the account of Eden must refer to its first application, when the progenitors of the Cushites still lived in their original homes. Havilah,[2] the Sandland,—that is apparently the Gold-sandland,—he thinks must have been the district afterwards known as Elymais or Susiana, which

[1] Dillmann translates it "The Broad-flowing."

[2] Gen. x. 29 has the name Havilah as the district of an Arab stock sprung from Joktan. In Gen. xxv. 18, it is said to be the eastern boundary of the Ishmaelites, instead of whom the Amalekites are named in 1 Sam. xv. 7. The Χαυλοταῖοι of Strabo, on the Persian Gulf, have been thought by some to point to its locality. Niebuhr found a name very like it in these parts. There is another Havilah mentioned (Gen. x. 7; 1 Chron. i. 9) among the sons of Cush, which points to South Arabia or Ethiopia. There is a place known to the ancients as Avalitæ, on the Abyssinian coast, below Bab el Mandeb. The bdellium of Genesis, seems to have been a fragrant gum, *but see note* p. 110.

is close to the region he favours. Eden, as the name of a country, he supposes to have been Mesopotamia, and from all this, he concludes, that the now swampy lowlands at the mouth of the united Euphrates and Tigris, were, certainly, the site of Paradise.[1] Unfortunately for this hypothesis, Sir Henry Rawlinson tells us[2] that the delta of the Schatt el Arab advances at the rate of an English mile in sixty-six years, and must have grown in early times at the rate of a mile in half that time, which would imply the addition of from 150 to 200 miles of land to the locality since the days of Adam.

Traditions of a primitive state of innocence reflect in every age and nation the truth of the narrative of Genesis. They date, in fact, from before the separation of mankind into different races, all countries evidently drawing them from a common source.[3] Coloured by local surroundings, national history, and heathenism, the story of a happy past, when "men, as yet without any evil passions, passed their lives without reproach and crimes, and therefore without punishments and restraints," has everywhere been cherished by mankind.[4] The ancient Egyptians looked back on the terrestrial reign of the god Ra, as a time of such purity and happiness, that they were wont to speak of anything especially perfect, as having been unequalled since the days of that god.

[1] Paradise means a place fenced round; and hence, a park, a garden with trees. The pleasure grounds and gardens of the Persian kings were called "Paradises." Xenophon describes one belonging to them as a garden very large and beautiful, having all things which the seasons produce. *Anab.*, iv. 10.

[2] *Journal of the Geographical Society*, vol. xxvii. p. 186.

[3] Ewald's *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 342. Lassen, *Indische Alterthumskunde*, vol. i. p. 528. Renan, *Histoire des Langues Sémitiques*, p. 457.

[4] Tac., *Ann.*, iii. 26.

Before the separation of the Aryan and Semitic races, the belief was common to both that the first age of humanity was one of innocence and bliss. The Aryans, indeed, developed this belief, in a way peculiar to them, into a tradition of successive ages of decreasing purity and happiness. Thus, in India, they held that the course of the world, which was to last for 4,320,000 years, was pre-ordained to exhibit—first, the age of perfection; then, that of threefold sacrifice, when all religious duties were faultlessly performed; next, that of doubt and religious decline; and lastly, our own, that of perdition, with which the earth is to come to an end.[1] The Greeks had their successive ages of gold, silver, iron, and brass; and the Persians, also, had the same idea, in a form of their own. The world, with them, is to last 12,000 years, divided into four periods of 3,000 each. Of these, the first was all pure; in the second, evil appears and declares war against good, in a struggle which is to last till the whole drama closes. But in all these conceptions, there is a marked contrast with the narrative of Scripture, for in all, alike, corruption grows by a fell necessity, through mere continuance. Born of the light, the universe grows darker the farther it recedes from it. Evil is not a matter of choice, but a decree of fate. How inferior this to the Scripture teaching!

The trees of life, and of the knowledge of good and evil, have been no less widely remembered. The Indian tradition speaks of the tree Kalpanksham, whose fruit gave immortality; among the Persians a similar tree was called Hom; among the Arabs, the Tuba; among the Greeks, the Lotus. On the Assyrian sculptures the tree of life is constantly seen, and its high importance cannot be doubted. It sometimes appears alone, sometimes wor-

[1] *Laws of Menu*, vol. i. pp. 68–86.

shipped by royal figures, at others guarded by winged forms in an attitude of adoration; but it is always incontrovertibly one of the loftiest of religious emblems, for we often see it surmounted by the winged disk, the symbolic image of the Supreme God, with occasionally a human bust above all. Alike on the bas-reliefs of Assyrian palaces, and on both Babylonian and Assyrian cylinders, it recurs with striking constancy.

All the traditions of Paradise, in every country, introduce this mysterious appearance. Those of India speak of four such trees on the four corners of Mount Meru; the ancient Persians have sometimes a single tree springing from the midst of a holy spring in Paradise, and sometimes two, corresponding exactly to those in Eden. The most ancient name of Babylon, in the idiom of the first dwellers in that region, was "The place of the tree of life,"[1] and even on the coffins of enamelled clay, of a date later than Alexander the Great, found at Warka, the ancient Erech, this tree appears as the emblem of immortality.[2] Strange to say, one picture of it on an ancient Assyrian relic, has been found drawn with sufficient accuracy to enable us to recognise it as the plant known as the Soma tree to the Aryans of India, and the Homa of the ancient Persians, the crushed branches of which yielded a draught offered as a libation to the gods, as the water of immortality.

The Fall in all its details finds an echo in every

[1] Lenormant, *Contemp. Rev.* (Sept. 1879), p. 155.

[2] Schrader, *Jahrbücher für Protest. Theol.*, vol. i. p. 124. Delitzsch *Chaldäische Genesis*, p. 304. In Egypt the tree of life is seldom seen except on funeral monuments, and it is always planted beside "the water of life." A Divine form, in the midst of the tree is, also, always represented as pouring forth this water of immortality to souls, personified by birds with human heads. *Vigouroux*, vol. i. p. 196.

religion of the world. Yeina, the first man in Aryan tradition, passed his life in a state of bliss, till he committed the sin which weighs on his descendants, and for this he was driven out of Paradise after being a thousand years in it, and was given up to the dominion of the Serpent, who finally brought about his death by horrible torments.[1] In one of the oldest portions of the sacred scriptures of Zoroastrianism, the good god, Ahuramazda, speaks of his having created man perfect, in "the best of dwelling places," and of the evil spirits having formed, out of the river and winter, the murderous serpent, man's destroyer.[2] A later, but still primitive, variation of this tradition discribes man as created holy, and destined to immortal happiness, if he continued pure in thought, word, and deed, and humble in heart. At first he remained true to God, but, later, falsehood ran through his thoughts; for the evil spirit, the serpent, seduced first the woman and then the man to believe that they were indebted for all their blessings, not to God but to him. Having thus lead them astray, the deceiver, who had lied them to their ruin, grew more bold, and presented himself a second time, *bringing them fruits, which they ate, and by eating which they lost all the hundred blessings they had had, save one,* and were wicked and unhappy. And now, having ere long discovered fire, by Divine revelation, they offered the first sacrifice of a sheep, and began to eat flesh, and clothe themselves with the skins of the creatures they killed, and to make garments of their hair.[3] The Edda of Snorro Sturleson tells how the immortal Idhunna lived with Bragi, the first of the

[1] F. Lenormant, *Contemp. Rev.* (Sept. 1879), p. 152.

[2] *Vendidad*, vol. i. pp. 5–8.

[3] *Zendavesta*, in Rosenmüller's *Das Alte und Neue Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 13.

skalds or minstrels, in Asgard, a paradise in the centre of the earth, pure and innocent. The gods had entrusted him with the guardianship of the apples of immortality; but Loki, the deceiver, the author of all evil, seduced her by other apples, which he said he had discovered in the woods. Idhunna followed him to gather them, but she was suddenly carried off by a giant, and there was no more joy in Asgard. The Tibetan legend is no less striking. The first men were, it tells us, perfect like the gods, but they grew corrupt when they ate of the white sugar-sweet Schima tree. Hunger came, and the brightness of their faces vanished. They had had wings before, but these withered away. Men were henceforth chained to the earth, and their lives were shortened.

Even the prediction of the crushing of the head of the serpent has perpetuated itself in the traditions of mankind. Among the Egyptians the serpent Assap fights against the sun and moon, but is pierced through by Horus. The Chaldeo-Assyrians had a great serpent called "the enemy of the gods." Pherecides of Syros borrowed from the Phenicians an account of a great man-serpent hurled into Tartarus, together with his companions, by the god Kronos (El), who triumphed over him at the beginning of things. It was under the form of a great serpent that the evil spirit, in the ancient Persian religion, after having tried to corrupt heaven, leaped upon the earth, where Mithra, god of the pure sky, fought with him while still in this shape. It is under this form, moreover, that he is finally to be conquered and chained for 3000 years, and at the end of the world burned up with molten metals.[1]

Nor did such traditions confine themselves to the East.

[1] For the religion of the ancient Persians, *see* Dr. Justi's *Geschichte des Alten Persiens* passim.

We find traces of them in ancient Roman sculptures. One famous sarcophagus in the museum of the Capitol shows a man and woman, naked, standing at the foot of a tree, from which the man is about to take some fruit, while the demon who has tempted him is standing near. On an ancient Roman bas-relief, again, a huge serpent is seen coiled round the trunk of a tree, beneath which a man and woman, in primitive nakedness, are standing. That the dim perpetuation of the old Bible story was common even to the Canaanites has, moreover, lately

AN EGYPTIAN GODDESS PIERCING THE SERPENT'S HEAD.
From *Wilkinson*, vol. v. plate 42.

THE INDIAN GOD KRISHNA CRUSHING THE SERPENT'S HEAD.
From Coleman's *Indian Mythology*, p. 34.

been strikingly shown by a curious painted vase of Phenician manufacture of the sixth or seventh century B.C., discovered in one of the most ancient sepulchres of Cyprus.[1] It exhibits a leafy tree, from the branches of which hang two large clusters of fruit, while a great serpent is advancing with an undulating motion towards the tree, and rearing itself to seize its fruit. In a Scan-

[1] Lenormant, *Contemp. Rev.* (Sept. 1879), p. 155.

dinavian legend, Thor, the firstborn of the highest God, a mediator between Him and men, fights with death, and in the struggle is thrown on his knees; but he breaks the head of the great serpent with his club, and finally tramples it under foot and slays it, though at the price of his own life.[1] So, in the oldest Hindoo temples, two figures of Krishna are still seen, in one of which he is trampling on the crushed head of the serpent, while in the other the serpent clings round him and bites his heel.[2]

Assyria, also, has yielded its tribute to these primeval echoes of the Fall. Among the relics brought to

SACRED TREE, WITH A SEATED FIGURE ON EACH SIDE, AND A SERPENT IN THE BACKGROUND.
From an early Babylonian Cylinder.

England by Layard is an ancient Babylonian cylinder, on which is a design representing, in the centre, a tree with horizontal branches, with two bunches of fruit hanging down, while on each side, respectively, sit a man and a woman; the former with the horns of an ox; the latter with simply a head-dress, but behind her is a serpent, erect. It is impossible in looking at this not to think of the Bible story of the temptation of Adam and Eve, or

[1] *Edda*, Fab. ii. 25, 27, 32.
[2] Maurice's *History of Hindostan*, vol. ii. p. 290.

to doubt that though, unfortunately, the Chaldean narrative of the Fall has not yet been recovered, it formed part of the traditions of the country, or that the serpent was recognised, in at least one form of the legend, as the agent in the catastrophe. The dragon Tihamat—the personification of the Tehōm of the Hebrews—the abyss of chaos—is, however, also frequently spoken of as the seducer of mankind, as if it were believed in Chaldea as well as with us, that the serpent was simply the instrument of the great spirit of evil.

George Smith discovered, among the ruins of Kouyundjik, the curse pronounced on the offenders after their transgression. His translation is confessedly uncertain; but, such as it is, the following is the principal part of it:—

The Lord of the earth called his name; the Father Ilu
In the ranks of the angels pronounces the curse.
The god Hea heard, and his liver grew angry,
Because the man had corrupted his purity.
Thus (spake) Hea: "How can I punish—
(How can I) destroy all my race!"
In the language of the fifty great gods,
By their fifty names he calls them, and he turns himself
From him (man) in wrath.
"Let him be overcome and destroyed at a blow," (said he).
"Let wisdom and science be against him and hurt him.
Let enmity be between father and son. Let robbery abound.
Let them bend their ear to their king, their chief, their ruler.
Let them thus anger the lord of the gods, Merodach.
Let the earth produce, but let not man eat of its bounty.
Let his desires be frustrated; his will unaccomplished.
Let no god take heed when he opens his mouth.
Let his back be hurt and not cured.
Let no god hear the piercing cry of his anguish.
Let his heart faint and his soul be troubled." [1]

[1] *Chaldean Genesis*, pp. 84, 85.

This lengthened malediction falls far short of the dignity of the curse pronounced in Genesis, but it is impossible not to feel that it refers to the same crisis in our history as a race.

That the sacred tree of Assyria is sometimes guarded by genii is an additional coincidence with the Bible narrative, which tells us of God's placing cherubim "before" Eden, "and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life." These mysterious beings are often mentioned in Scripture. They covered the mercy seat with their outspread wings; they were represented on the walls of the Temple of Solomon, in the Holy of Holies, and they appear in the vision of Ezekiel. The tradition of their presence in Eden impressed itself deeply on the popular mind in Assyria, reappearing age after age in such forms as the winged bulls with human faces, which guarded the entrances to the palace of Nineveh. "The watchful bull, which protects the strength of my kingdom and the glory of my honour," says Asarhaddon, in an inscription which refers to one of them. Nor is it less striking that they bear the very name of Cherubim, or Kerubi; even the gates which they watched coming in the end to be similarly called. That they were regarded as at least symbols of mysterious higher existences, able to protect and preserve what was put under their care, is evident from their place being sometimes occupied by known divinities, and by the fact that a bas-relief, representing the erection of one, under the direction of King Sennacherib, bears on it, after the divine symbol, the words, "the bull," "the god."[1]

The flaming sword of which Moses speaks as in the

[1] Lenormant's *Berose*, pp. 80, 135. *Les Origines de l'Histoire* pp. 109–117.

hands of the cherubim has often exercised the ingenuity of scholars, but it must, we fear, remain for ever a mystery. Could it be the lightning which we see represented in Assyrian sculptures as held by the god Bin, the deity of the air, in the form of a flame spoken of as "a sword of fire"?[1] An old Accadian fragment, translated by Lenormant, perhaps assists a judgment—a nameless god boasting in it, with high exultation, of possessing a sword formed of seven rays of fire, shooting out into a revolving circle of fifty tongues of flame. A translation of this curious legend has been published, and furnishes matter so interesting that a short extract may be useful.

In my right hand I hold my disk of fire,
In my left I grasp my disk of slaughter.
The sun with fifty faces . . a sun which never turns back—
The mighty weapon which, like a sword, devours in a circle
The bodies of my enemies,—
The weapon that breaks the mountains . .
The flaming blade of battle, which wastes the rebellious land,
The great sword which overthrows the ranks of the valiant.[2]

Another legend has been discovered, and translated by Mr. Fox Talbot, which no less strikingly illustrates the sword of the cherubim. The subject is the "Fight between Bel and the Dragon." The god appears armed with his flaming sword.

He raised it in his hand;
He brandished the lightnings before him.
A curved scimitar he carried on his body,
And he made a sword to destroy the dragon,
Which turned four ways. . .

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[1] Rawlinson's *Great Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 164.

[2] Lenormant *Les Premières Civilisations*, vol. ii. p. 193. *Les Origines*, *n.* p. 135.

To the south, the north, the east, and the west.
He made a whirling thunderbolt—with double flames[1]
Impossible to extinguish."

In all, he took with him seven thunderbolts or lightnings.[2]

Such were the legends of Western Asia, but those of the east and of the central plains were no less striking. Heavenly beings, armed with the lightnings, guard the Soma tree of Indian fable; and on the steppes of Asia, the Tartars, in keeping with their pastoral habits, believe that there is, somewhere, a grass known as the grass of life, which is protected by a supernatural being on horseback.[3]

Nor are such illustrations of the external facts of the Bible narrative the only echoes of Paradise which lingered among mankind. The existence and origin of evil were a special theme of ancient poets and philosophers. The Greeks especially, among Western nations, delighted to dwell on the subject.

Thus Hesiod, in the 9th or 8th century before Christ, tells us that men at first lived happy, free from toil and sickness, or evils of any kind.

Lo, at first, lived the race of earth-tilling men
Kept far from suffering or from weary toil,
And from sad disease which brings death to mankind,
For trouble makes mortals grow early old.[4]

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[1] Forked lightning.—The flaming sword of the Assyrian legends is, in fact, only the Tchakra of Indian mythology—a circular weapon edged with sharp swords, which was made to whirl rapidly, and thrown out before the warrior who used it, and then pulled back to be hurled out again. Lenormant, *Les Origines*, etc., p. 133.

[2] *Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. pp. 1–21.

[3] Weber's *Ind. Stud.*, vol. ii. p. 313.

[4] *Works and Days*, lines 90–93. The other quotations are lines

Plenty and contentment filled their souls, amidst their easily gained though simple living.

Easily, then, would they do in one day the work
Which now needs a full year, and that often profitless;
Soon then rested the helm of the boat over the hearth,
And brief were the toils of the ox and the load-bearing mule.

But this state did not continue long. Prometheus deceives Jupiter, the father of gods and mortals, and as a punishment on the human race, fire is hidden from them. But Prometheus, whose offence, like that of the sons of Eli at Shiloh, was taking for common use some of the flesh and fat of sacred offerings, dexterously discovers the fire, and takes it away, unknown to the Thunderer, in the hollow of a staff, and gives it to man. Then Jupiter threatens him.

Thou art glad to have snatched away the fire and deceived me;
Look then for woe on thyself and the future generations of men.
I give them with fire a curse, in which all
Shall rejoice in their hearts, embracing the evil I send.

He now sends Pandora, the first woman, formed by Hephaistos, and presented by each of the gods with a gift. Epimetheus, forgetful of the warning of his brother, Prometheus, never to take a gift from Jupiter, takes a casquet he gives, opens the lid, and forthwith all the evils of man's lot fly out.

43–46, 47, 55–58, 101–104. The Bible, it will be noticed, differs in its story of the Fall from all heathen traditions, in leaving absolute moral freedom to man, and with it responsibility and power of restoration; whereas, outside its statements there is nothing but fatal destiny, destructive of all true morality.

The earth around is full of evil, and so is the wide sea.
Diseases as well, by day and also by night,
Approach unbidden and bring evils to mortals.
They come still and softly, for Zeus Kronion has made them dumb.

Only Hope remains behind in the casket; Pandora, at the counsel of Jupiter, having closed the lid before this also flew out. And now the poet closes the pitiful story by the moral.

Thus it is permitted to none to escape Jove's ruling power.

In the Theogony of Hesiod, this relation is expanded and modified, adding the terrible punishment inflicted on Prometheus, and his deliverance, but the moral is the same as in the "Works and Days." "No one can escape the ordinances of Jupiter or circumvent them." Æschylus, in his "Prometheus Bound," gives, in the fifth century before Christ, a later expression of Greek thought on the same themes. Men at first, in his idea, were wretched, living in caves, and ignorant even of the course of the seasons. Prometheus raises them from this degradation, from foolish love to man and bold defiance of the gods. Jupiter is the enemy of our race: he their friend. His theft of fire from heaven is their salvation, for all the arts and comforts of life spring from it; but he has to bear untold sufferings on account of it—sufferings, nevertheless, ultimately removed. How they were so is, however, left to a third tragedy, now unfortunately lost.

The resemblances between these highest expressions of the thought of antiquity, echoing in their own way primitive tradition, show striking similarities in their leading features to the Old Testament narrative. Both paint the original state of man as one of freedom from all suffering, through happy contentment and unbroken peace with

God; both account for the origin of evil and the consequent loss of man's first estate; both link its entrance on our world with an act of disobedience towards the Godhead, and ascribe its committal to the agency of woman. The Old Testament says that through eating the forbidden fruit man became like God, in the knowledge of good and evil; the Greeks that the act which brought sorrow into the world was also the opening of a new and higher era of knowledge: the exchange of a childlike state for a more complete one.

The contrasts, however, are still more striking than the resemblances. Genesis portrays God as the One only self-existent and independent; the universe as the creation absolutely under His control; sin as a voluntary transgression of His law, which itself, as a reflection of His nature, is holy, just, and good. The Greek mind sees in Jupiter a being, who while supreme as regards man, is himself controlled by fate: one who acts by tyrannical caprice, wholly dissociated from moral considerations. It sees in the world a self-existent, and therefore partly independent, rival to him, and in sin a misfortune rather than a fault. "The Fall," to the Greek, is a struggle of violence and craft between man and the Godhead, in which the latter conquers, as it were by accident, and, at most, by outward power. In the Old Testament, sin is the unholy opposition of the creature to the Holy Creator; of the absolutely dependent to the absolutely Independent. Elohim sits throned in unapproachable power, wisdom and holiness; the law-giver, the judge, the punisher of man —the guilty transgressor, created sufficient to have stood, but free to fall, and choosing of his free will to sin.[1] In

[1] See a fine article by Dr. G. Baur, on *Die Alttestamentliche und die Griechische Vorstellung vom Sündenfalle. Studien und Kritiken* (1848), pp. 321–368.

the Bible, moreover, the spectacle is presented from the first, of the continued rise of man from the ruin of his early sin. In paganism we have the golden age surely darkening into that of iron.

The highest flights of human speculation are represented by the Greek conceptions, but we feel at once how immeasurably they fall below the simple but divine philosophy of Genesis—the legacy of a race to whom ababstract speculation was unknown ; a race which accepted without question, as final truths, what its prophets and holy men received by inspiration. How comes it, to use the words of J. G. Fichte, who certainly had no undue leaning towards revelation, that "The ancient and venerable record," in which we find the Hebrew teachings, "taken altogether, contains the profoundest and the loftiest wisdom, and presents those results to which all philosophy must at last return"?[1] What answer can be given except that God Himself is its Author?

Note.—In connection with the words Gen. iii. 18, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee," the Rev. Hugh Macmillan strikingly observes—"It is a remarkable circumstance that whenever man cultivates nature, and then abandons her to her own unaided energies, the result is far worse than if he had never attempted to improve her at all. There are no such thorns found in a state of nature as those produced by the ground which man once has tilled, but has now deserted. In the waste clearings amidst the fern brakes of New Zealand, and in the primeval forests of Canada, thorns may now be seen which were unknown before. The nettle and the thistle follow man wherever he goes, and remain as perpetual witnesses of his presence, even though he departs; and around the cold hearthstone of the ruined shieling on the Highland moor, and on the threshold of the crumbling log-hut in the Australian bush, those social plants may be seen

[1] Quoted in Brentano's *Bible*, vol. i. p. 16. (Frankfurt, 1820–1833.)

growing, forming a singular contrast to the vegetation around them."

Another extract will serve as a note to page 64:—"All the eras of the earth's history, previous to the Upper Miocene, were destitute of perfumes. An odoriferous flora, that of the labiates, is met with only in the periods immediately before man. But so widely spread, and so numerous is this order of plants, that in South Europe they form one-nineteenth of the flora, and in the tropics one-twentieth: and even on the chill plains of Lapland, out of every thirty-five plants one is a sweet-smelling labiate."—*Macmillan's Ministry of Nature*, p. 25.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ANTIQUITY OF MAN.

IT is one of the healthiest signs of the present day that all questions are treated as open to calm and serious investigation, however long and generally they may have been regarded as settled. The search for truth is the noblest occupation of the mind or heart, and as such must be pre-eminently an impulse from Him who made us as we are. To deserve our homage it needs, however, to be reverent; anxious to establish, not to destroy; patient in observation and research; and slow to admit conclusions which overthrow accepted opinions. It does not, of course, follow that because a belief is of long standing it is right; but respect for our fellows, the modesty of true science, and the presumption in favour of hereditary conviction, demand the most diffident humility in its examination.

To a large extent this is shown by our men of science; but the charm of a supposed new discovery, the tendency to see facts in the light of preconceived notions, and the rareness of the philosophical power to gather a sufficient basis of facts before generalizing, tend not seldom to induce a hastiness in advancing new theories, which has at least an air of rashness.

In no direction has this been more noticeable of late

years than in the speculations so much in vogue respecting the origin and the antiquity of man; for while some, like Dr. Darwin, have borne themselves with a modesty and ardent desire for truth which disarm personal feeling, even where the opinions advanced are most distasteful, others have been restrained by no self-distrustful humility, but have rivalled Oscar Schmidt, who supplies a genealogical tree, showing the descent of mankind from creatures on the level of the Ornithorhynchus of Australia.[1] In the same way some have hinted rather than asserted the immense antiquity of mankind, while others have dogmatised on the subject in a manner that is almost amusing. "Man," says M. Lalande, "is eternal."[2] "The Aryans," says M. Piétrement, "had tamed the horse and used it habitually at an epoch anterior to the year 19,337 before the Christian era."[3]

This vast antiquity has been claimed for our race on various grounds; especially that of geological evidence. Two hundred thousand years are assumed by some as the lowest estimate of man's appearance in Britain, but how much earlier he had existed elsewhere, before, is left an open question.[4] A chronology has been invented, from changes of climate supposed to have extended through immense periods, and the traces of man are fitted into its spaces. The tools found have been classified, to mark successive ages of vast duration, as those, respectively, of

[1] Schmidt, *The Doctrine of Descent and Darwinism*, p. 270. The slightness of the grounds on which some prevalent geological theories are based, through the tendency of average scientific men to adopt blindly the hints of superior minds, and carry them out to rash lengths, is well shown in an able book, *Scepticism in Geology*. (London: Murray, 1874.)

[2] *Congrès Univ.*, 1867, *Compte Rendu*, p. 423.

[3] *Les Origines du Cheval domestique*, p. 280.

[4] Dr. James Geikie's *Great Ice Age*, p. 561.

the rough and the polished stone, the bronze, and the iron periods. The supposed evidence of deposits in caves, of river and other gravels, of fen-beds, of geographical changes, of the presence of extinct mammals along with human remains, are pressed into the service. But it staggers our faith in the whole chronological scheme to find, at the outset, that while one high authority reckons the boulder clay in which old stone implements are found as marking 200,000 years,[1] another, no less eminent, sets it down as 980,000 years old.[2] The age of human implements found under floors of stalagmite in caves is, moreover, open to equal doubt, since observers differ greatly as to the rate of deposit at different times;[3] for while Mr. Pengelly tells us that it takes 5,000 years to create an inch of lime-dropping on the floor of Kent's Cavern,[4] others assert that, elsewhere, it is formed at the rate of the third of an inch a year,[5] which would give a foot in depth in little more than a century. A copper plate of the twelfth or thirteenth century, we are told, was found in a cave at Gibraltar, under eighteen inches of stalagmite.[6] At Knaresboro', objects are incrusted with similar calcareous deposit so quickly, that, as is well known, a trade in them is briskly kept up. In Italy, the waters of the baths of San Filippo have been known to deposit a solid mass of it, thirty feet thick, in twenty years.[7] It is thus clear that the rate of deposit depends on circumstances. One condition of the surface

[1] Geikie's *Great Ice Age*, pp. 529, 561.
[2] Croll's *Climate and Time*—On Boulder Clay and Till.
[3] Mr. Callard, in *Nature* (January, 1874).
[4] *Manchester Scientific Lectures* (1873–4), p. 130.
[5] Mr. Boyd Dawkins, *Athenæum* (April 12th, 1873).
[6] Southall's *Recent Origin of Man*, p. 221.
[7] *Ibid.*

may supply acids, from decaying vegetation, for example, which may dissolve the limestone much faster than another. It is not, therefore, by any means certain that any given deposits, in a special case, imply even an approach to the extreme age demanded for them.

The evidence deduced from river and other gravels and drifts is no less unsatisfactory.[1] It is indeed quite impossible to fix their age either from their depth or their contents. Mr. Wood found the road leading to the Temple of Diana, at Ephesus, more than four yards below the present surface, and he obtained remains of colossal sculptures, at the Temple itself, from a depth of six yards and a half. Local floods work great changes, and it is to be remembered that all rivers are much larger in a country still in a state of nature than when human settlement has in great measure drained off the surface waters. The shifting of river beds themselves works great changes. M. De Rossi thinks that the beds of drift in the course of the Tiber are not older than the Roman Republic. M. Chabas, in a close examination of the tool-bearing drifts of Northern France, found that, at one part, bits of Roman pottery, at another, a copper coin of Charles VIII. of France, at a third, pieces of yellow brick, were as deep in the soil as the stone axes, etc., were at others, and finally gave up the hope of fixing the age of anything by its position.[2]

The theory of widely separate ages for old and new stone tools, and for bronze and iron, is one of those scientific fancies which further investigation overthrows. To use the words of the Duke of Argyle:[3] "There is no proof whatever that such ages ever existed in the world." Nations may all at a certain time have used stone tools,

[1] Chabas, *Études sur l'Antiquité Historique*, p. 562.
[2] *Ibid*, chap. viii. p. 519. [3] *Primeval Man*, p. 181.

but the discovery of the metals must have been made much sooner at some places than at others. Thus, though flint implements have been found in abundance in South Africa, iron has been known from very ancient times over a large portion of that vast continent; iron ore, as Sir Samuel Baker informs us, being so common in Africa, and of a kind so easily reducible by heat, that its value might well be discovered by the rudest tribes. Stone, moreover, is rare in some countries, as, for example, in Mesopotamia, and hence it is not surprising to find that stone implements of a very rude character coexisted there with an advanced civilization in agriculture and commerce.[1] Each "age," in fact, runs into the other, and tools of all the four kinds were used in not a few localities at the same time. So far from being indefinitely ancient, the stone age, in all its characteristics, has prevailed during even the historical period. A well-made bronze pin was found in an excavation at the Isle of St. Jean, near Maçon, in France, which till then had yielded only remains of the polished stone period, and M. Chabas found iron under similar circumstances elsewhere.[2] "The age of bronze must be limited more and more," says Professor Desor. "Iron is found throughout it." In Holland, tumuli known as Hunnebedden (the graves of the Hunni) are common. Beneath the covering of soil are found rough casings of unhewn stone, covering chambers of stone, regularly squared and smoothed, with a flooring of broken granite. Under this, funeral urns are met with, along with numerous flint tools and weapons, such as polished hatchets, chisels, arrow-heads, hammers, etc. Some of these are rough, that is, of the oldest "age;" others are partly polished; still others, polished

[1] Rawlinson's *Two Great Monarchies*, vol. i. pp. 119, 120.

[2] *Etudes*, p. 522.

perfectly. Along with these, occur samples of pottery often of elegant shapes, and finely ornamented by means of instruments of wood or bone. Fifty of these barrows have been opened, without finding any trace of metal in them, and yet scientific men are of opinion that they are not older than the Roman period, when the country began to rise above the vast floods, which till then had covered it nearly every year. Holland and the neighbouring Low Countries seem, indeed, to have been formed from the vast beds of soil worn off the Alps and other mountains, by the glaciers which formerly reached to the North Sea, but have now retreated to Switzerland, and from deposits by the waters of the Rhine, the Meuse, the Scheldt, the Ems, and the Yssel. At first only the sandhills and other elevations, natural or artificial, were habitable, and these, in Cæsar's time, were still so many small islands, whose savage and brave inhabitants were believed to live on fish and the eggs of birds.[1] About the beginning of our era, the Batavians took possession of the country, but the Hunni lingered on amongst them even during the Roman period, and have left these tumuli, apparently remotely prehistoric, but, in fact, to give the words of M. Pleyte, dating from the commencement of our era to A.D. 500.

The Chevalier de Rossi has found equally striking proofs of the lateness of the stone age in Italy.[2] "The whole evidence," says he, "proves to demonstration that the new stone age was very near that of true history." This conclusion is confirmed by the discoveries so frequently made, and every day becoming more numerous, of stone weapons mixed with objects of bronze. I

[1] Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.*, iv.

[2] *Comptes Rendus du Congrès International d'Archæologie Prehistorique* (1871), p. 464.

myself have found early uncoined copper money (*aes rude*) along with polished stone weapons; and a number of flint knives have been obtained from Etruscan graves. Indeed, a piece of *coined* copper money, marking a still later period, has been found in an Etruscan tomb alongside a stone knife, undoubtedly of the "new stone period." Not less striking are the results of excavations on the sites of the Roman-Gallic cities of France. Thus at Bibracte, the largest, richest, and most important town of the Edui,[1] there have been discovered, after scientific explorations, remains of pottery, jewellery, enamel-work, work in metal and *coins*, mingled with flint arrow-heads, polished stone axes, and a flint knife. The same results have been obtained on the site of Gergovia, near Clermont; weapons, vases and large pins of bronze, pieces of jewellery and Gallic coins have been found along with stone knives, arrow-heads, axes, etc.[2] Similar stone weapons and tools have also been met with on the site of Alesia, in the Jura, with the skeletons of Gauls, their personal ornaments, and weapons of bronze and iron, and even the remains of their armour.

The lateness of the stone period has received further illustration by the discovery that the ancient Egyptians, though already possessing and using all the metals, and enjoying a high civilization, systematically used stone tools for mining and other purposes. Brugsch found them along with remains of ancient pottery at the turquoise mines of Midian.[3] They are met with, moreover, so widely, and under such circumstances, through all Egypt, that it appears as if they continued to be used freely in common life.[4] M. Mariette found in the tombs of the

[1] Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.*, i. and vii. [2] Chabas, *Études*, p. 514.
[3] Brugsch, *Wanderungen nach den Turqis Minen*, p. 71.
[4] Chabas, *Études*, p. 377.

ancient Egyptian empire at Saqqara, and at the pyramids, bas-reliefs showing workmen cutting wood with a tool exactly resembling the stone axes of the Polynesian Archipelago. There is a stone knife in the British Museum bearing an inscription which shows that it is not older than the sixth century before Christ; another, at Athens, has a Greek inscription; while a third, at Copenhagen, has one in Runic characters. There is, indeed, no distinctively stone age in Egypt, but stone tools are found abundantly along with those of iron and other metals, as if the Egyptians used them for many of the same purposes, and with almost equal commonness, as the barbarous peoples round, who did not know the metals, or were unable to procure them. Mr. Keast Lord[1] found in his minute explorations of the mines of Midian, that the veins of metal had been worked by stone tools exclusively, many of which he brought away with him; and he mentions, also, that owing to geological changes, the lakes from which the miners obtained water for drinking, and for their operations, are now gone, though the shells of the fresh-water mussel, used for food by the miners, still remain in the old lake beds. Their huts, moreover, of rough dry stone, without mortar, and in everything bearing proofs of the highest antiquity, are still standing. Yet the inscriptions show incontestably that these workings, and the lakes themselves, date from within the strictly historical period, and even so late as the twelfth century before Christ. But for these inscriptions, however, how certainly would the mines have been referred to an unknown antiquity, accompanied as they are by the fact of the vanished lakes and the archaic huts? But it cannot be said that the stone period is even yet a matter of the past, for M.

[1] *Leisure Hour* (1870), pp. 423 ff.

Mariette, having noticed his Arab labourers shaving their heads with razors of flint, and the Arabs of Qournah having showed him Bedouin lances tipped with flint, justly says, that "he fancied himself transported to the stone period, and arrived at the conclusion that the age of stone survived in Egypt under the Pharaohs, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Arabs, and finally that it still, in a certain measure, survives in our own day."[1]

Extreme antiquity has been claimed for man on the additional ground of the presence, with stone tools and weapons, of the bones of quadrupeds no longer found in the same latitudes. But who can tell the age of these bones? Parts of the mammoth, the cave bear, and the reindeer have been found at a depth of two feet under the surface in the caves of Rully de Germolles; and a human jaw, a mammoth's tooth, and a fine flint arrow have been found at the depth of thirty-two inches. Nor is it easy to judge of the time required for the disappearance of animals from a country. Within the historical period, the lion, the aurochs, and the bear abounded in Macedonia, and the boa in Calabria. The hippopotamus, which was hunted in Lower Egypt by the ancient Egyptians and still lived in the Damietta mouth of the Nile in the time of the Caliphs, is now never seen farther north than 19°—that is, eight degrees farther south. The crocodile frequented the Delta 3,000 years ago; now, it never comes north of 27°, and is steadily going south. The reindeer seems, from a passage in Cæsar, to have still lived in Gaul in his days, for he speaks of "an ox of the shape of a deer, from whose head, between its ears, a horn rises higher and less straight than the horns known to us. From its top (that is, from the top of this common base) branches spread out widely, like palms. Both male

[1] Chabas, *Études*, p. 396. Dawson's *Fossil Man*, pp. 205 ff.

and female have the same shape and extent of horns."[1] The similarity of the head of a reindeer to that of the ox is well known, and the fact of male and female having similar horns is peculiar to it. It still lives in Asia even lower than 50°, and in America to 46°, which is fully 2° farther south than the latitude of Paris, and nearly on a line with Geneva, and with Odessa, in southern Russia.

The fact of great changes of climate in our Northern hemisphere at widely separate periods is a geological fact which none affect to dispute, but there is a wide difference of opinion as to the frequency of these changes or their cause. "In the tertiary epoch," says Heer, "a distribution of heat is discernible in zones, but the decrease of heat towards the poles was much less marked than at present. Whilst the tropical zone was probably little warmer than in our own day, Central Europe during the lower Miocene period had a climate nearly equivalent to that of the Southern United States, or that of North Africa. Under the Arctic zone, in lat. 78° N., the island of Spitzbergen was covered with forests of swamp-cypress, sequoia,[2] many kinds of pines, plane-trees, walnuts, oaks, and lime-trees—a fact which justifies the belief that vegetation reached to the pole itself, if the land extended to it. Since then the heat has been diminishing. During the earliest glacial period it sank several degrees below the present mean annual temperature, and continued so for thousands of years. Then it rose again, and the Swiss lignite beds were formed, the forest bed of the coast of Norfolk, and the elephant and rhinoceros inhabited these regions. It then fell once more, and a second glacial period began. Then it rose again, and has continued unchanged ever since." The cause of the greater heat of the Miocene period Heer

[1] Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.*, vi. 24. [2] Our *Wellingtonia gigantea*.

thinks may have been from the sun traversing a warmer region of space than it moves in now—all regions sharing in the greater warmth.[1] Dr. Blandet supposes that the sun was originally much larger than it is—the planets having been thrown off from it in its revolution.

The higher temperature of the Northern Pole as compared with the Southern is supposed by Heer to rise from the distribution of land round the two—the southern having almost none. Dr. Croll, a scientific man of high eminence, on the other hand, fancies it rises from the varying inclination of the earth's axis, which, he believes, causes the relative position of the two poles towards the sun to be periodically reversed at distant periods.

According to that writer and Dr. James Geikie, "the seasons in the two hemispheres are reversed every 10,500 years," during certain "periods of high ellipticity of the earth's orbit." The last of these periods we are told "began some 200,000 years ago, and terminated about 80,000 years ago—embracing a period of 160,000 years." During this immense cycle, therefore, there must have been not two glacial periods, as Heer imagines, in reference to the ages since the Miocene, but fifteen changes of climate within 160,000 years; each change reversing the seasons in the two hemispheres—the pole which had "enjoyed continuous summer" being "doomed to undergo perpetual winter" for 10,500 years, and then passing to its former state for an equal term: oscillating, in fact, between heat and Arctic cold at these intervals for the 160,000 years. Man, it is affirmed, inhabited Western Europe, at least in the warm periods, from the beginning of the 200,000 years. But a theory, however acute,[2] is a

[1] Heer's *Primeval World of Switzerland*, vol. ii. p. 270.

[2] I would here express my high sense of the ability, learning, and desire for truth alone, of both Dr. Croll and my honoured relative Dr. James Geikie, though I am forced to differ from them.

dangerous toy, when the facts by which it seeks its justification are interpreted in opposite ways by equally learned men. The approximate dates of the glacial periods are matters of keen dispute, nor can we accept imaginary chronology, however famous its author. It is simply a guess, and carries no authority whatever. Moreover, the dates of these periods have no necessary connection with the antiquity of man, for the proof of human remains or implements being found in glacial drifts are sadly defective, and in any case their mere accidental proximity to traces of glacial action could in no degree prove that both have a common age. If so, Roman remains found in a glacial drift may settle the Roman period as a million years ago.

The character of the animals, now extinct in the countries where their remains are found in connection with those of man, has been held to prove the lapse of vast periods, for some now represent a tropical, while others are found only in an Arctic climate. It is arguing unsafely, however, to say that, because the rhinoceros, for example, is now found only in the tropics, it never lived in colder latitudes. The body of one "still retaining its corpulency," its skin, its tendons, and some of its flesh, was discovered in 1771, in Siberia, on the banks of the Wilaji river, a tributary of the Lena, at the latitude of about 65° north,—that is, on a line with the middle of Iceland. It was particularly noticed that it was covered with hair, to enable it to withstand the cold: a peculiarity which existed in the mammoth also, with the same object.[1] That huge animals like these could find subsistence in latitudes so high involves no difficulty, for hardy

[1] A mammoth found in Siberia, in 1804, had very close set red wool an inch and a half long over its skin, with black hair rising above it—an Arctic covering, in fact.

trees and shrubs still grow far north, in Siberia, and therefore, to use Prof. Owen's words, "we may safely infer that the mammoth would have found the requisite means of subsistence, from the twigs and branches, at the present day, and at all seasons, in the sixtieth parallel of latitude; and relying on the body of evidence adduced by Sir Charles Lyell, in proof of increased severity in the climate of the northern hemisphere, we may assume that the mammoth habitually frequented still higher latitudes at the period of its actual existence. It has been suggested that as in our own times the northern animals migrate, so the Siberian rhinoceros and elephant may have wandered towards the north in summer. The hairy covering of the mammoth concurs with the localities of its most abundant remains, in showing that, like the reindeer, the northern extreme of the temperate zone was its metropolis."[1]

Strange to say, the wider range of the elephant—of which the mammoth is a species—in antiquity, is illustrated by the hieroglyphics of Egypt and the cuneiform inscriptions of Assyria, for the former commemorate the killing of 120 in the chase, in Northern Syria, by Thothmes III. in the seventeenth century before Christ,[2] and the latter speaks of them as hunted in Mesopotamia five centuries later.[3]

Thus it is clear that the presence in northern countries of animals now only found in warm climates, or the disappearance of others from a given region, is no proof whatever of the lapse of very great periods of time.

[1] Prof. Owen, quoted in art. Elephant, *English Cyclop.*

[2] Brugsch's *Egypt*, vol. i. p. 358. Maspero's *Histoire Ancienne*, p. 205. [3] Chabas, *Études*, p. 579. The Bengal tiger abounds in lat. 48°, to which the polar tailless hare sometimes wanders. *Antiq. of Man*, p. 158.

The comparatively modern date of the stone age throws a reflected light on the time when the reindeer, elephant, great bear, etc., lived in North-western Europe, for stone tools, as well cut as those of the "new stone period," have been found among their remains, some of which still exhibit spirited sketches of the reindeer, mammoth, etc., graved on them by some sharp instrument. The theory of a vast interval between the rough and the polished stone eras, or between them and that of bronze and iron, will not, in fact, stand examination, for they are often found together and continually occur under circumstances which decide their comparatively recent origin; and the supposition that the period of the mammoth, reindeer, rhinoceros, etc., necessarily mark equally vast and remote intervals cannot be maintained.

One point appears to have been strangely overlooked by the advocates for the immense antiquity of man—that geological changes are and have been continually going on. The geological period in fact dates from this moment back. The land in the Gulf of Bothnia rises at the rate of thirty-nine inches in a century, which in 3,000 years would give an elevation above its former level at that date, of over thirty-seven feet. But such a depression would turn Russia, from St. Petersburg to Sebastopol, into a great lake, with who can tell what effect in modifying the climate? No one can say that such a steady elevation has not been the gradual creation of Russia, within a comparatively recent period, by slowly draining off the waters of some ancient Scythian ocean—the sea, perhaps, beyond which the Hyperboreans were anciently thought to live.

[1] Prof. Green says from two to three feet in a century. *Geology*, p. 337. Prof. Jukes says that about the North Cape the land rises *five or six feet* in a century. *Manual of Geology*, p. 52.

A rise of two hundred and twenty feet in the volcanic region of the Bosphorus would effect equally startling results, for it needs no more than that to spread an inland fresh-water ocean from the plains of the Lower Danube and Southern Russia, over the areas of the Black, the Caspian, and the Aral Seas, with their neighbouring steppes, far and near—to create, in fact, a second Mediterranean.[1] With the surface of the earth rising and sinking by steady oscillation in so many regions even now, who can say that the tradition is wrong which ascribes the drainage of this vast region to a volcanic commotion rending open the Bosphorus about 1,500 years before Christ, and causing the terrible catastrophe which antiquity handed down in the legend of Deucalion's flood—the flood, it may be, of Genesis ?

Nor is this great geological change alone in the recent history of our globe. Dr. Hecker, of Berlin, notices the fact that in the terrible paroxysms of nature which accompanied or preceded the Black Death, in the fourteenth century—the most awful mortality that ever attacked mankind—huge icebergs were formed on the east coast of Greenland, then inhabited by Northmen from Denmark and Iceland, and that since then neither the land nor its people have ever been seen.[2] The German Arctic Expedition of 1869–70, indeed, by the utmost efforts caught glimpses of the land, but their vessel was presently destroyed, and the crew saved only by drifting southwards on an icefloe for eight months together.[3] For twenty-six years before the Black Death, physical convulsions shook the surface of the earth in uninterrupted succession. Vast river districts were converted into swamps; a

[1] Wood's *Shores of Lake Aral*, p. 117.
[2] Hecker's *Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, p. 28.
[3] *The German Arctic Expedition* (London, 1874), passim.

lake of more than 100 leagues in circumference was formed in China, by the disappearance of a whole chain of mountains; in thousands of places chasms opened; springs burst out on the tops of hills, and dry tracts were laid under water in an inexplicable way.[1] Calamities and phenomena, in fact, which usually come singly, at distinct intervals, were crowded together, as no experience could have imagined possible.

We believe, then, to quote the words of a most intelligent and well-informed writer, that "in the present state of our knowledge, attempts to estimate the age of the human race are premature, and that all statements which assign from 6,000 to 250,000 or more years, as the time which has elapsed since certain individuals ceased to exist, require revisal. On the whole, it appears probable that man existed with many of the extinct mammalia with whose remains his own are associated; but, notwithstanding all that has been said or written, we do not know even one fact which thoroughly establishes this point. . . . It is possible they may have existed ages before." [2]

On every ground science may, thus, well be diffident in reasoning on the past from the present, or in constructing a chronology of ages for the existence of man, when each footstep of it is open to the gravest challenge.

[1] *Hecker*, pp. 8, 14.

[2] Art. Man. *Supplement to English Encyclopædia.*

CHAPTER X.

ANTIQUITY AND ORIGIN OF MAN.

IN the last century the advocates of the extreme antiquity of the human race based their speculations on the highly scientific grounds of such astronomical evidence as they believed to be supplied by the Egyptian zodiacs, the inclination of the earth's pole, the position of the constellations, and the like. Thus Dupuis, the author of the once celebrated book "L'Origine de tous les Cultes,"—The Origin of all Religions,—expresses his astonishment in finding his ideas exactly supported by the ancient zodiacs. But he was moderate, in his own opinion. "It is not necessary to place back further than 14,000 or 15,000 years the invention, not indeed of astronomy, but of the hieroglyphic figures of the zodiac which the Greeks received from the Egyptians and the Chaldeans." Proud of his discoveries, he adds, "Thus I have cast the anchor of truth into the midst of the ocean of ages."

But he had cast his anchor into the midst of an ocean of error instead of into that of truth, for at the very time when his book was published, a child, the future Champollion, was born at Figeac, who, thirty years later, discovered the secret of hieroglyphics. The Egyptian zodiacs were then found to date only from the Roman period, and Dupuis' theory was proved a mere dream.

It is necessary, indeed, at all times, alike for men of science, and for the public who listen to them, to be cautious. Like all the world besides, scientists are, as a rule, disciples rather than masters, and confidently repeat the theories of a few men of original ideas, with a mechanical submission which makes no effort to winnow the truth in them, from its inevitable mixture of errors. Thus Hutton suggested, that the same causes as are at work at present in nature, are to be regarded as the sufficient factors in all the geological phenomena of the past. Sir Charles Lyell adopted this view, and supported it with such fulness of illustration that it became the accepted basis of modern geology. But not contented with recognising a great truth in it, subject to modification, more or less frequently, under the different conditions of the development of the crust of the globe, his followers have repeated his ideas with a docile literality, from which independent thought was conspicuously wanting. It is refreshing, therefore, to find a man like Professor Green, of Leeds, of enough original force of mind to break at last the spell under which speculative geology has lain too long, by questioning whether, after all, the physical phenomena of the past were always as gentle and unmarked as at present; whether, in fact, the demand for an indefinite lapse of time for the phenomena of the earth's crust can be justified. The extreme views hitherto in vogue are thus challenged in their turn, and we are asked to believe the much more rational theory, that while the present natural causes were demonstrably main factors in the development of the earth's crust, others, of indefinitely greater force and rapidity of action, from time to time burst into play.[1]

In the same way, the pre-glacial man of Mr. Boyd

[1] Green's *Geology*, p. 522.

Dawkins,[1] and the theories of Dr. Croll, are infallibly destined to find themselves superseded, after a time, when some fresh and powerful brain marks a new departure in scientific leadership.

The extreme antiquity of man has been maintained on the ground of the extreme antiquity of extinct or existing civilizations, but, as it seems, on inadequate grounds. Chinese chronology was fancied, at one time, to run back authentically to periods astoundingly remote, but a better knowledge of the subject has latterly shown that the historical period in China does not reach farther from us at most than 2200 years before Christ.[2] Dr. Edkins, indeed, would limit it to B.C. 781, or at most to B.C. 1154.[3] India was supposed at one time to boast of a history whose shadowy periods triumphantly disproved the Scripture teaching of the lateness of man's creation. But science now grants that the earliest Indian event it can trace is the descent of the Aryan tribes from the tablelands of Asia to the plains of Hindustan, "perhaps about the year B.C. 2000."[4]

Failing in the case of China and India, Egypt seemed next to offer itself as a country of immemorial antiquity. Boeckh,[5] a distinguished German scholar, set down the date of the reign of Menes, who is universally accepted as the first king of Egypt, at 5702 years before Christ. Unger,[6] another great German scholar, preferred the year 5613. Mariette Bey, the learned French Director of the Antiquarian Museum at Cairo, strikes off the odd cen-

[1] *Cave Hunting*, by Boyd Dawkins, passim.
[2] Brockhaus' *Conversations Lex.* (xii. Auf.), vol. iv. p. 611.
[3] *Leisure Hour* (1876), p. 653.
[4] Brockhaus' *Conversations Lex.* (xii. Auf.), vol. xi. p. 325.
[5] Born 1785, died 1867.
[6] Born 1800, died 1870.

turies, and fixes Menes at 5004 years before Christ, in which he is followed by Lenormant,[1] his most distinguished disciple. Professor Maspero, of Paris, thinks the year 4500 about the proper date. Brugsch Bey, a German long resident in Egypt, and the author of a learned "History of Egypt derived entirely from the Monuments,"[2] has chosen the year 4455. Lepsius[3] and Ebers, master and disciple,[4] but both deservedly famous as Egyptologists, think that Menes reigned 3892 years before Christ. The Chevalier Bunsen[5] at first assigned the year 3623 to him, but at a later time thought the year 3059 more correct. Our own Dr. Birch,[6] the head of the Egyptian Department in the British Museum, and of merited fame in his special studies, decides for "about the year before Christ 3000." Mr. Reginald Stuart Poole,[7] head of the Numismatic Department in the British Museum, and devoted to Egyptian studies, thinks the proper date the year 2717; while the late Sir G. Wilkinson,[8] whose great book on the Ancient Egyptians entitles him to the highest consideration, agreeing in the main with Mr. Poole, ascribe the accession of Menes to the year before Christ 2691.

Between the highest and the lowest of these calculations there is a difference of no less than 3011 years, and yet they are all the estimates of distinguished men. The result involved in such a variation is the same as if

[1] *Manuel de l'Histoire Ancienne*, p. 321.

[2] An English translation has just been published in two vols., 1879.

[3] In his *Chronologie der Egypten* (1849).

[4] *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 211.

[5] *Egypt's Place in Universal History*, vol. v. p. 63.

[6] *Egypt from the Earliest Times*, p. 23.

[7] *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. i. p. 508.

[8] Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. ii. p. 287.

some future historian were to date the reign of our present queen from the year 1837, while another maintained that her proper place was in the days of Moses. Let us see how is it that eminent Egyptologists differ so much.

The only authority for Egyptian chronology, till recently, was the lists of kings quoted by various ancient writers from the lost book of Manetho, an Egyptian priest of the third century before Christ. But his figures have been a constant perplexity to students, since he follows the Egyptian custom of counting all the years of kings who reigned more or less together, as when a son was crowned during his father's life.[1] No wonder that Brugsch should say that this source of error alone "places such doubts and difficulties in the way, as to make one despair in putting together a chronological table of the old Egyptian empire."[2]

To add to this hopelessness, the Egyptians themselves had no conception of chronology,[3] and give us no dates from which to reckon. Manetho's figures, moreover, "easily lend themselves to all the chronological systems;"[4] while the only corroborative list of royal names,—that of a document found at Abydos, and known as the Turin papyrus,—is so mutilated that it affords very imperfect aid in checking Manetho's lists. Still more, "the monuments are beginning more and more to discredit his numbers," so that "unless we choose, without any war-

[1] Brugsch, *History of Egypt*, vol. i. p. 120.

[2] *Ibid*, p. 120.

[3] "The greatest hindrance to a regular Egyptian chronology is the circumstance that the Egyptians themselves never had any chronology at all."—*Lenormant*, vol. i. p. 322.

"Everything still remains to be done in this province (that of chronology) so far as relates to the time preceding the XXVI. Dynasty (that is to the year B.C. 666)."—*Brugsch*, vol. i. p. xviii.

[4] *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 183.

rant, to strain his indefinitely elastic lists at our pleasure, there remains no other course than to wait till some fortunate discovery relieves us from this dangerous experiment."[1] Brugsch bases his figures on the estimate that three reigns were exactly equal to a hundred years,[2] while Canon Rawlinson tells us that twenty years is the real average duration of the reign of Eastern kings,[3] and as if this were not enough to discredit extreme conclusions, no one knows what kings reigned together or when each began to reign singly.

The high antiquity of Egyptian civilization was at one time thought to be proved by relics obtained by Mr. Horner from borings in the mud of the Delta, and indeed Ebers quotes them even now in support of it.[4] That a piece of pottery had been found at the depth of 39 feet was taken as proof its having been buried for 13,000 years.[5] Sir J. Lubbock and Sir C. Lyell, accepting this conclusion, came to wonderful conclusions; for their estimates, with those of various papers read before learned societies, are that bricks and pottery in Egypt date from 12,000 to 60,000 years back. Unfortunately for all this fine speculation, Sir Robert Stephenson found in the Delta, near Damietta, at a greater depth than Mr. Horner ever reached, a brick bearing on it the stamp of Mohammed Ali.[6] Mr. Horner, moreover, supposed the rate of the deposit of mud, at a given spot, only three and a half inches in a century,[7] but the description of the

[1] *Brugsch*, vol. i. pp. xix. xx.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 33.
[3] *Origin of Nations*, p. 20.
[4] *Ægypten und der Bücher Mose's*, p. 22.
[5] Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*, p. 395.
[6] Southall's *Recent Origin of Man*, p. 474.
[7] The changes in the Hooghly are so rapid that it is impossible to fix the limits of property on its borders, that which is solid ground one year being swallowed up, and new territory formed

same spot by a Mahometan writer only six centuries ago, shows that the mud is deposited at the rate of over eighteen inches in a hundred years.[1] No wonder that even the *Anthropological Review* pronounces Mr. Horner's evidence as preposterous, and laments that Sir Charles Lyell "should have thought it worth his while to notice such absurdities."[2]

The rise of Babylonian civilization was long supposed, on the authority of fragments of a book by Berosus, a priest at Babylon about 260 years before Christ, to be as old as the Egyptian had been fancied to be, on the authority of Manetho. But here, too, the advance of exact knowledge has dissipated exaggeration. Scholars are now virtually agreed that the earliest traces of Babylonian history date, at most, only to the year 2500 before Christ,[3] though Berosus had assigned the Flood to the year 41,697, and the legends of the cuneiform tablets claim a reign of 432,000 years for ten kings before that calamity. George Smith and Professor Sayce, indeed, think that "no contemporary monuments can be placed earlier than 2300 years before Christ, and even this date may be too early for our oldest known monuments,"[4] and Lenormant is of the same opinion.[5] Allowing ample time for the first stages of tribal or national development,

in other parts. It is the same with the Lower Mississippi where there are no dams.

[1] *Southall*, p. 474.

[2] "Pieces of brick stamped with the Grecian honeysuckle, and therefore, at the earliest, dating from the time of Alexander the Great, have been obtained from as great depths as Mr. Horner's borings."—*Saville, On the Truth of the Bible*, p. 26.

[3] Brockhaus' *Conversations Lex.* (xii. Auf.), vol. ii. p. 629.

[4] Smith's *Babylonia*, edited by Prof. Sayce, p. 54. Schrader's *Babylonien*, in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*.

[5] Lenormant, *Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient*, vol. ii. p. 22.

this would at most carry Babylonian history to a date of 3000 years, or thereabouts, before Christ.

The evidence of language has been advanced as another ground for believing in the extreme antiquity of the human race, but it is a great question if it be entitled to any weight. The descent of the Aryan tribes into Hindustan, for example, is fixed by the highest authorities at not further back, at the most, than about 2000 years before Christ,[1] but what changes and developments have taken place since then in the Sanscrit language which they spoke! It has itself died out, but from it have sprung the Hindu dialects of India, the Zend of ancient Persia, the Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Wallachian; the different Celtic languages; the Gothic, German, and Scandinavian languages, including English; and the Slavonic, of which there are many mutually unintelligible dialects in Russia, Austria, and Bulgaria. Iceland was colonized by the Northmen in the ninth century; but their language, then pure Scandinavian, is not understood by other Scandinavian races now. The Nibelungen Lied is only seven hundred years old, but its German is a sealed language except to scholars. A thousand years ago a national song might have waked enthusiasm over all the area in which English, Dutch, and German are now spoken in Europe, for its language would have been everywhere understood. Since the colonization of Iceland, three new languages, of course related, have sprung from the Scandinavian—the Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian. Fifteen hundred years ago Latin was the

[1] Haug, indeed (*Essays on the Sacred Language, etc., of the Parsees*, p. 225), assigns the date of B.C. 1500 for the dawn of Iranic civilization, or that of the Medes, Persians, and perhaps the Bactrians, while Max Müller (*Ancient Sanscrit Lit.*, p. 572) thinks that Indian civilization *began* about B.C. 1200.

mother tongue of all the nations now speaking the Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, and Wallachian. There are nearly a hundred languages spoken at this time in the Caucasus, and in South America Humboldt reckoned them by hundreds. Amongst the one hundred islands occupied by the Melanesian race, there are no less than two hundred languages, differing from each other as much as Dutch and German. Among some races of Central Africa, Barth tells us, the want of friendly intercourse between tribes and families has caused so many dialects to spring up as to make communication between them difficult. On the river Amazon Mr. Bates found several individuals in a canoe speaking mutually unintelligible languages. It is, in fact, impossible to fix any approximate period for the rise of new forms of speech. "If there be nothing like literature or society to keep changes within limits," says Max Müller, "two villages, separated for only a few generations, will soon become mutually unintelligible. This takes place in America as well as on the borders of China and India; and in the north of Asia, Messerschmidt relates that the Ostiaks, though really speaking the same language everywhere, have produced so many words and forms peculiar to each tribe, that even within the limit of ten or twelve German miles, conversation between them becomes extremely difficult." What then must have been the history of language in the early ages of the world, when each hamlet was at war with its neighbour; when society, literature, and civilization were yet unborn, and when the human mind itself had as yet the instability and ignorance of childhood?

Looked at, therefore, from every point of view, there seems no ground for placing the appearance of mankind on the earth further back than the Bible has assigned, but, on the contrary, every reason for accepting its state-

ments. The keenest critical investigation has decided with a wonderful unanimity that the history of our race, except in the case of Egypt, does not reach further back from the present day than about 4,500 years; while, as to the antiquity of Egypt itself, scholars differ to the extent of no less than 3,000 years. But even if we were to take the period as approximately correct, which Lepsius and Ebers adopt—3892 years before Christ, it would be perfectly reconcilable with the chronology of the Bible, of which, as has been shown, we have no authoritative statement. It would at most take us back 5,700 years, and leave, according to many eminent chronologists, ample margin for all that is related in Genesis of an earlier date. But the subject is in apparently hopeless confusion and darkness. It is at least free to all to withhold full assent to chronological systems, when even their authors admit that the data on which they are based are largely conjectural. Nor is it easy to imagine how Egypt, if civilized two thousand years before any other nation, should for all these centuries have been a centre of light, without transmitting some of its brightness to countries around, with which it was in constant intercourse.

The varieties of the human race have been held another proof of its extreme antiquity. The contrast between the negro and other branches of mankind has especially been insisted upon, the fact being often quoted that we find him mentioned in a historical Egyptian document of the seventh Dynasty,[1] and depicted exactly as he is, on the monuments, at a later period. But the rise of a new type and even of a new colour of mankind is not unknown even within the historical period. The Jews of the East are now as black as the inhabitants, while those of cold countries are as fair as Caucasians. The

[1] *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 99. *Records of the Past*, vol. ii. p. 3.

American differs in the whole physical appearance and in the shape of his face from the Englishman, whose near descendant he is. The Turks of Europe in a few centuries have diverged so far from their Tartar original that they are sometimes referred to the Caucasian stock, though we know their Mongolian origin. The Magyars of Hungary have lost in a thousand years nearly every trace of the Tartar features of their ancestors—the Ostiaks of Northern Siberia. The tall, lank American Indians can be recognised as derived from the squat and strongly marked Mongol, only by the unerring witness of their various languages. Who would suspect the uncouth and stunted Lapp to be of the same family as the tall, well-formed, handsome Magyar? Yet they were originally one.

The negro seems, indeed, to have assumed his typical characteristics from special conditions, in a tropical climate. "The real African," says Winwood Reade,[1] a most competent witness "is copper-coloured, and superior to the negro, mentally and physically. It is my belief that the negro inhabits only maritime districts, or the marshy districts of the interior; that he originally belonged to the copper-coloured race; and that his degeneration of type is due entirely to the influence of climate and food." The privations of the natives of Connemara, in the year preceding the famine of 1847, were remarked as having led to a change in the whole physical type: the jaws becoming prominent, as in the negro, and the whole man affected. It is to be remembered, moreover, that a modification of structure or colour once introduced becomes permanent, and that circumstances may lead to it to the most surprising extent in a very short time, as in the lower animals. All the varieties of domestic pigeons

[1] *Anthropological Review* (Nov. 1864), p. 341.

are traced by Darwin to the stock-dove,[1] and are rightly ascribed by him to artificial selection by man. Accidental malformation may be artificially perpetuated, when desired, by separation of the malformed as the stock of a new variety. The different breeds of sheep, horses, oxen, goats, cats, rabbits, and still more of domestic fowl, show that all these species, even while under human observation, are subject to greater variations than are found in the different races of men.[2]

Whether the different families which repeopled the earth after the Deluge had already become more or less contrasted, is not within the possibility of answer. But with the acknowledged changes in bony structure and colour, which have been quoted from instances within recent times, there surely remains no surpassing difficulty in the belief that the negro may early have assumed his special characteristics, from special influences of locality and food; and these, by a law of nature, would be perpetuated ever after. The words of Darwin respecting varieties in domestic animals need only slight change to be applied to mankind. "The argument mainly relied on by those who believe in the multiple origin of our domestic animals is, that we find in the most ancient records, more especially on the monuments of Egypt, much diversity in the breeds; and that some of the breeds resemble, perhaps are identical with, those still existing. Even if this latter fact were found more strictly and generally true than seems to me to be the case, what does it show, but that some of our breeds originated there, four or five thousand years ago." [3]

[1] *Origin of Species*, p. 23. Many interesting facts on the subject of this chapter may be found in Wiseman's *Connexion between Science and Revealed Religion.*

[2] See, on this, *Eng. Cyclo.*, vol. ix. p. 670.

[3] *Origin of Species*, p. 18.

CHAPTER XI.

ORIGIN OF MAN, AND HIS PRIMITIVE CONDITION, ETC.

IT is now nine years since Mr. Darwin published his "Descent of Man" (1871), which startled the world by calmly maintaining that we have sprung, by slow and almost imperceptible stages, from the lower animals. Man's extreme antiquity on the earth, which had first been broached about twelve years before, was thence-forward urged with increased confidence. But, to use the words of Mr. Wallace, one of the foremost of living naturalists, and the most eminent supporter of some of Mr. Darwin's views: "It is a curious circumstance that, notwithstanding the attention that has been directed to the subject in every part of the world, and the numerous excavations connected with railways and mines, which have offered such facilities for geological discoveries, no advance whatever has been made for a considerable number of years in detecting the time or mode of man's origin. The Palæolithic (old rough) flint implements, first discovered in the North of France more than thirty years ago, are still the oldest undisputed proofs of man's existence; and amid the countless relics of a former world that have been brought to light, no evidence of any one of the links that must have connected man with

the lower animals has yet appeared."[1] Two skulls, supposed to be the oldest as yet found, show no trace of inferiority. One is not of so low a type as that of most existing savages, but, to use the words of Professor Huxley, "may have belonged to a philosopher, or may have contained the thoughtless brains of a savage"; the other, as Dr. Pruner-Bey informs us, surpasses the average of modern European skulls; while its symmetrical form compares favourably with the skulls of many civilized nations of modern times.

Nor is the want of evidence of the development of humbler into higher races limited to man. Its utter absence in the case of the lower animals, and of plants, goes far to show that the theory has no basis of facts in nature, and that it is thus most unlikely to be correct in reference to human beings. The doctrine of the transformation of species," says Heer, "is most decidedly contradicted by facts. Not only has no new species originated during the period of human history, but even the lignites (or woody coal), which go back to a much earlier time, exhibit the existing flora. The present Swiss Alpine plants are the descendants of the Alpine drift flora, but, though living under different physical conditions, it is impossible to distinguish those of the present day from plants of the drift flora of Iceland and Greenland. It is the same with marine animals. No new species has had its origin since the drift period.

[1] *Tropical Nature and other Essays*, p. 286, by A. R. Wallace. Mr. Wallace, like Mr. Boyd Dawkins (*Cave Hunting*), believes man to have been pre-glacial—that is, to have existed hundreds of thousands of years ago. Hence his words on the origin of man have the greater weight. It should be remembered, however, that he is no geologist, and simply takes the word of others as to the extreme antiquity of the race.

Nor is this peculiar to the drift. The same facts are true of preceding geological periods. The same species maintain their existence through long cycles, and often, in all parts of the globe, present precisely the same characteristics. The formation immediately following any earlier period, and belonging to a new epoch, may contain some species inherited from the preceding period, but the greater part of the species show us a new type, and present distinct characteristics. There are no forms which would indicate a fusion of species."[1] Such is the testimony of one of the acutest observers, and most accomplished geologists of the day.

It has further been noticed, that so far from deterioration as we go back, we find it rather as we come down towards the present; for the oldest cave dwellings, claimed by some scientific men as marking an immemorial antiquity for the race, show a far higher degree of mental activity and civilization in their inhabitants than the relics of what are held to be much later times. The variety of tools and weapons—scrapers, awls, hammers, saws, lances, etc.—the numerous bone implements, including well-formed needles; implying that skins were sewn together, and perhaps even textile materials woven into cloth—above all, the numerous carvings and drawings, representing a variety of animals, such as horses, reindeer, and even a mammoth; executed with considerable skill on bone, reindeer horns, and mammoth tusks; show a state of civilization much higher than that of some of our modern savages, and lead to the belief that the most ancient skulls we possess, are not exceptional in their high development, but fairly represent the characters of the then existing race. Thus, instead of growing like the

[1] *Heer*, vol. ii. pp. 282, 291. Dr. Heer, we believe, died last year

animals, as he recedes into dim antiquity, man has, at best, only preserved the high type shown in these, his earliest ancestors.[1]

Since, then, no trace of an approach to the ape, in any particular, has been found in any geological deposit or superficial drift, we may dismiss the simial origin of man as a baseless, because utterly unsupported theory. The lowest rocks have preserved the traces of marine worms and other zoophytes, the carboniferous strata entomb specimens of reptiles, fruits, flowers, and leaves, and of the spiders and insects then existing: the other rocks abound in the remains of animals of all kinds, and retain even the impress of the foot of a bird or a small reptile, and of the rain-drops of a passing shower, on what was once soft sand. Surely, then, some traces would have been forthcoming of the missing links between man and the lower orders had they ever existed. It will be time enough to dwell on the creature "not worthy to be called a man," which Sir J. Lubbock thinks was our immediate ancestor, when he produces some sign of his

[1] In reference to the flint tools and weapons found in caves like those of Devonshire or Derbyshire, it has been said that the fact of the mouths of the caves being now high above the level of streams which formerly overflowed into them, marks an untold lapse of time. But elevations of land are common, frequently rapid, and often, moreover, very limited in their range. The well-known case of the Temple of Serapis, at Puzzuoli, near Naples, shows that within the historic period, the spot where it stands was once beneath the sea; was afterwards upraised, and became the site of a temple older than the one whose remains are now standing; was possibly again submerged, and again upraised before the building of the present ruin; was again let down till the sea rose at least twenty feet above the pavement of the Temple; was again raised into dry land, and is now slowly sinking once more. Lyell's *Principles of Geology*, vol. ii. chap. xxx. Green's *Geology*, p. 336.

ever having been more than a philosopher's invention. Till then we prefer to extend to both the physiology and higher nature of man the words which Professor Huxley limits to the latter; that between man and all lower animals, even the highest, there is a difference so wide that it cannot be measured—"an enormous gulf," "a divergence immeasurable" and "practically infinite." Indeed he might almost, apparently, have adopted the words of Max Müller: "Man alone employs language,—he alone comprehends himself,—alone has the power of abstraction,—alone possesses general ideas. He alone believes in God."[1] When such absolute contrasts obtrude themselves, the choice of opinions seems easy. There may well have been in the Creator's plan occasional development of powers, or changes of appearance, as the result of long-continued change of outward relations; but, beyond this, the theory of man's descent or that of other creatures, from races below them, remains a mere theory still, in spite of the zealous efforts of a school to elevate it to something more. For our part, we prefer to believe with Moses, that our race is a species created by itself, and endowed directly by the Almighty with unique mental and spiritual characteristics, rather than with the anthropologists, who would trace us back to the lower creatures.

The original state of man has been supposed, by those who believe in his extreme antiquity, to have been one of "utter barbarism,"[2] wanting even elementary religious ideas; our present civilization being the gradual development of untold ages.

But there are many grounds for questioning this theory. It cannot, for instance, be inferred that the discovery

[1] *Chips, etc.* vol. iv. p. 458.

[2] This is the view of Sir J. Lubbock, in his *Prehistoric Man.*

of rude stone implements in any country is an index of the state of civilization in other parts of the world at the same time, for in that case the South Sea Islanders and the Eskimo would determine the estimate of our present condition in a way hardly just. Nor can the finding similar tools in Germany, France, or England be any measure of the civilization existing at the period to which they belong on the banks of the Euphrates or Nile.[1]

It is the mode of this school to collect all the most degraded and savage customs and usages of any people, and assume that they are traces of the original condition of the race. But such a course is utterly unphilosophical, for it may with equal force be urged that they are illustrations of the decay of a primitive civilization, under circumstances leading to such degradation. That tribes and nations have thus sunk is beyond a question. Herodotus[2] tells us of the Geloni, a Greek people, who, having been expelled from the cities on the northern coast of the Euxine, had retired into the interior, and there lived in wooden huts, and spoke a language "half Greek, half Scythian." By the first century after Christ, Mela tells us they had become completely barbarous, and used the skins of their slain enemies as coverings for themselves and their horses.[3] The Veddas of Ceylon, now savages of the most debased type, are believed, on the reliable ground of their vocabulary, to be degenerate descendants of the tribes who brought Aryan civilization to the plains of Hindustan.[4] "They make themselves understood," says Sir Emerson Tennent, "by signs, grimaces, and guttural sounds, which have little resemblance to definite

[1] Duke of Argyll's *Primeval Man*, p. 184.
[2] *Herod.*, iv. 108
[3] *Pomp. Mel.*, ii. 1.
[4] Rawlinson's *Origin of Nations*, p. 5.

words, or language in general." Yet of this race Max Müller writes: "More than half of the words used by them are mere corruptions of Sanscrit; their very name is the Sanscrit for hunter. If now they stand low in the scale of humanity, they once stood higher; nay, they may possibly prove in language, if not in blood, the distant cousins of Plato, and Newton, and Goethe."[1] The obliteration of Roman civilization in many parts of the empire, after the irruption of the barbarians, is an equally striking example of the lapse of nations from a higher to a lower culture.

It is easy to realize how the mere pressure of increasing numbers on the means of subsistence would drive weak tribes from hospitable to more and more wretched homes, where with security, except from each other, they would have to maintain such a struggle for existence as must infallibly involve their sinking into barbarism. The Eskimo at the north of the American continent, and the savages of Terra del Fuego in the far south, are illustrations; for what but dire necessity could have forced human beings to take up their abode in such terrible regions, if the warm and fertile landscapes of happier climates had been open to them? Even amidst Arctic regions, indeed, the feuds of tribes drive the weaker still farther north. Thus Admiral Osborne[2] informs us that a tribe wandering along the extreme northern edge of the Siberian coast had recently driven another tribe across the Frozen Sea to an island lying so far north that only its mountain tops could be occasionally seen from the Siberian headlands. "Terra del Fuego," says Mr. Darwin, "is a broken mass of wild rocks, lofty hills, and useless forests, and these are viewed through mists and

[1] *Chips*, vol. iv. p. 360.
[2] *Times*, December 30th, 1867.

endless storms. The habitable land is reduced to the stones of the beach. In search of food the people are compelled to wander unceasingly from spot to spot, and so steep is the coast that they can only move about in their wretched canoes."[1] How could tribes in such a land, or those in the uttermost north, amidst eternal ice, be anything but degraded? But it cannot surely be said that they were created at first where we now find them, and it is hard to believe that they have not become greatly lower than their ancestors, who came from happier lands.

The supposed absence of any religion among some savage races has been assumed as a proof of the "utter barbarism" of primeval man. But surely if some men, as, for example, the late John Stuart Mill, can speak of themselves as without any religion, even amidst modern society, it is easy to understand how the gross mental darkness of long-continued savagery, struggling for the meanest existence, may efface or nearly efface all religious conceptions. It is, moreover, certain that religions are apt to decay as they grow old. "If there is one thing," says Max Müller, "which a comparative study of religions places in the clearest light, it is the inevitable decay to which every religion is exposed."[2] Nor is it at all a necessity that even if man were originally placed merely in the first step of ascending culture he might not have had lofty and pure though simple views of God and of his duty. The further we go back in history the clearer become the traces of some pure traditions and the rays of some primeval light.[3]

The fact that during the ages in which extreme bar-

[1] Darwin's *Voyage of a Naturalist*, p. 216.
[2] *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. i. p. xxiii.
[3] *Primeval Man*, p. 190.

barism prevailed over Europe—and when the world at large seems to have been peopled mostly by tribes reduced to the deepest rudeness by constant wars, and by the savagery to which these led,—a civilization such as that of Egypt should have existed, seems, further, to imply the preservation on the banks of the Nile of an inheritance from an earlier period of culture and advancement. Archbishop Whately's argument that no tribe or people was ever civilized from within itself, but always by influences from without,[1] seem indisputable if applied to such utter degradation as Sir J. Lubbock assumes in the first men—a degradation leaving them hardly above the animals. Some Prometheus must surely in such a case have brought the Divine spark to them from heaven. But in Egypt we find, apparently as early as B.C. 3000[2]—that is, 5000 years ago—a civilization producing marvels of architecture which still remain unique. To raise a structure like the Great Pyramid, 746 feet square at the base, rising to a height of 450 feet, requiring the labour, for thirty years, of relays of men, numbering, in all, eleven millions![3]—a structure, to present it in another way, covering a ground space of over twelve square acres, containing 90,000,000 cubic feet of masonry, and weighing, as is calculated, 6,316,000 tons,[4]—implies an earlier civilization of which it is the crowning triumph. This is still more certain when we find that it is truly square, the sides being equal and the angles right angles; that the four sockets in which the first four stones of the corners rest are exactly on the same level; that the directions of

[1] Whately's *Miscellaneous Essays. Lecture on Civilization.*

[2] Chabas gives the date of the Pyramids at B.C. 3300. Lepsius and Ebers at B.C. 3100, 3000.

[3] *Herodotus*, ii. 124.

[4] *English Cyclopædia*, art. Egypt.

the sides are accurately to the four cardinal points; and that the vertical height of the pyramid bears the same proportion to its circumference at the base as the radius of a circle does to its circumference.[1] Nor are all these measures, angles, and levels merely in a degree accurate; the best modern instruments can scarcely detect the very slightest error. The workmanship of the interior chambers, moreover, is not less wonderful, for the passages, and the chambers themselves, are lined with huge blocks of granite, polished to the highest degree, and fitted into each other with the utmost accuracy.[2] Such architecture surely points back not to "utter degradation," but to an inheritance of civilization presumably from beyond the Flood.

The distinguishing characteristics of the corn plants, such as oats, wheat, barley, rice, maize, etc., seem in the same way to point to a very different condition from "utter degradation," as that of our first parents. Like the fruit trees and many of the existing animals, they make their appearance on the earth along with man, and are entirely unknown in earlier ages. Moreover, while the primitive types of all our other esculent plants are still to be found in this or other countries, those of the corn plants are utterly unknown. Corn has never been met with except as a cultivated plant. It is found in the wrappings of Egyptian mummies, and in the charred remains of the Swiss Lake dwellings, but never apart from its cultivation by man. It cannot grow spontaneously, and is never, like other plants, self-sown and

[1] Professor Piazzi Smyth's *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*. Professor Smyth devoted many months to these measurements, etc., using the best instruments.

[2] Birks' *Egypt*, vol. i. p. 35. Wallace's *Tropical Nature*, etc., p. 299.

self-spread. If not cultivated, it soon disappears and grows extinct. It needs human labour to perpetuate it, and seems to have been given us by God as it is, to stimulate our industry and reward it.[1] If the ear be plucked off before ripening, a second growth rises from the roots the next year; but if it too be cut off, the plant gradually shrinks into a worthless grass, which not only cannot be improved again into grain, but is soon destroyed altogether by the more vigorous natural grasses. Given by God to our first parents, the grain plants secured a transcendent blessing for all their offspring, on condition of steady industry in their cultivation; but such a gift implies a condition far removed from Sir J. Lubbock's "utter degradation."

It is not necessary to suppose that man was created in any state of artificial luxury or refinement. The truest happiness is found not in an overwrought civilization, but in the simple plenty and contentment of a condition where our wants are still few and natural, and our intelligence and knowledge acute and sufficient, if not disciplined and profound.[2] The Ohio farmer, or the Swiss peasant, owning his land, free from any anxiety for the future, with every want of the body supplied, and nature, if not books, ever open to feed his mind, may enjoy life and be worthy of it, far more than if his lot had been cast in the midst of an artificial refinement. The soul, moreover, "that pillar of true dignity in man," is independent of outward circumstances for the grandeur of its hopes, contemplations, or spiritual life. The clear heaven of an innocent bosom is an element which, added to a very

[1] See *Bible Teachings in Nature*, p. 102. By Rev. Dr. Macmillan.

[2] See some thoughtful remarks in S. Baring Gould's *Heathenism and Mosaism*, p. 49.

simple outward condition, would make it a paradise; and that our first parents had. How much knowledge they had we cannot tell; but remembering the fact that the mere savage resembles the brute, inasmuch as he makes no improvements,[1] it is not too much to believe that they possessed the germs of much that needed only experience to develop into the arts and sciences of life and nature. If it be asked, in Fichte's words, "Who then educated the first pair?" his answer may also be given, "A spirit bestowed its care on them;" that is, they were gifted with intuitive knowledge, as far as needed, at their creation.

[1] Whately's *Origin of Civilization*, p. 34.

Zöcler's *Beziehungen zwischen Theologie und Naturwissenschaft*, vol. iii. p. 751.

On this subject and others connected with the Antiquity of Man, much interesting information will be found in *Fossil Men and their Modern Representatives*, by J. W. Dawson, LL.D., etc. London, 1880.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DESCENDANTS OF ADAM.

THE stay of man in Eden may have been longer or shorter, but from the first it could only have been conditional. Mere untried virtue does not deserve the name, nor can they be said to have a character, that is, a moral nature, who have not been tempted. Goodness is not a passive quality, but the deliberate preference of right to wrong; the resistance of evil and the manly assertion of its opposite. The innocence of childhood is only that of a simplicity to which as yet temptation is impossible; and of a nature so incomplete, that it has as yet no passions to resist. But with opening manhood there must come trial, for it bears the elements of it in its bosom. Our first parents, like ourselves, stood face to face with countless solicitations of the intellect and heart, however excited, and it remained to be seen whether they would subordinate them to the higher will of God, or weakly act in independence of Him. In either case, good and evil would alike have been learned; the good in the peace it brought, the evil as its hateful opposite; or the evil in the misery it involved and the good only as the peace for which we yearn. The latter was the choice; but sad as it has proved, it has had this mitigation, that the struggle towards the good that had

been lost is the source of all that is most noble. Better unspeakably, to have developed under the favour and in the friendship of Heaven; but still, even as it is, our fallen state is tempered by the discipline of struggle, intellectual and moral, to which we were henceforth committed.

Eden was no longer the place for man when he had lost that peace and joy of his higher nature which it had symbolized. It is impossible to fancy what is meant by the Tree of Life. Like the fabled tree of the Persians, or like that of India, it may have yielded the food and drink of immortality,[1] or it may only have been a symbol of the great truth, that spiritual life is to be sought by us, not from within, through our own faculties or powers, but from without, at the hands of God.[2] In any case man had separated himself from his Creator, and he must needs be made to realize it by leaving a scene identified with the Divine presence.

But though he was punished for his transgression, our first parent was not cursed. Mysterious beings, in long after times the appointed guardians of the mercy seat[3] in the Tabernacle and in the Temple, with flaming sword, were set to keep the way of the Tree of Life. What this can mean it is impossible to understand, for we know nothing by which to illustrate it. The symbolical creatures to whom the name cherubim is given in Scripture throw no light on it, for we can never argue from a symbol as if it were a reality.

Their presence, however, hints at least at the yearning of man for immortality, and is in keeping with the great promise with which Scripture closes, that those found

[1] Rosenmüller's *Das A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 9.
[2] Bishop Harold Browne, in *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. p. 40.
[3] Exod. xxv 17–22

worthy shall have right to the Tree of Life, in the midst of the better Paradise of the City of God.[1] The Jews of Christ's day, indeed, fondly cherished this hope. "And it is permitted no single mortal," says the Book of Enoch, "to touch this tree of sweetest fragrance till the time of the Great Judgment; but when everything shall be reconciled and made perfect for ever, it will be given over to the righteous and lowly."[2]

Is it idle to think that the flaming splendour was more than a mere barrier to man's approach, especially when the cherubim, who are always connected with ideas of the presence of God, are introduced along with it? They over-arched the mercy seat with their wings; they are represented as bearing up the throne of God.[3] Was not the brightness, darting, in this case, its sword-like rays on every side,—the symbol of the presence of God; like the light which shone from the cloud, on the camp of Israel in the wilderness? May it not have marked the first sanctuary of our fallen race? May not Cain have alluded to it when he went out from "the presence of Jehovah?"[4] May not our first parents, in their penitence, have cried out before it like the Psalmist of later days, "O Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth!"[5]

The first children born to Adam were to bear sad proof of the ruin which sin had brought on mankind. Cain, the first-born, was thought a great gift from God when he came; a "possession" to be cherished with all a

[1] Rev. xxii. 14.

[2] *Das Buch Henoch*, Kap. xxv. 4.

[3] Ezek. ix. 3; x. 4, 18. Ps. xviii. 10.

[4] Gen. iv. 16.

[5] Ps. lxxx. 1. See McGavin's *Scripture Characters Illustrated* p. 16.

mother's love. But his name had the double meaning of "a spear" as well, and sorely was it to pierce her![1]

Abel, his brother, a name, in Accadian, meaning "a son," "a child," born after a time, had that name fitly rendered in a Hebrew sense, whether in prospect, or afterward; for his brief day and sad end were to show that life is only "vanity," and its joy at best "a breath." When the first child came, Eve had a living miracle before her, which seemed to promise her as much future comfort as it gave her present delight. "She had gotten a man from Jehovah;" she had something to wean her mind from her great sorrow; something to love, watch over, and weary herself in fond endearments towards. But the bright morning was to be overclouded ere noon.

After a time, we are told, when the two had grown to be men, they chose their callings in life—Cain turning to agriculture; Abel to the simple pursuits of a pastoral life. No interval of "utter degeneracy" is sanctioned in the Scripture account of the first men; no dismal age of living on roots and shell fish, or the produce of the chase, as naked savages; they begin in Eden, to work it and watch it;[2] after the Fall they turn to the tillage of the field, and the rearing and tending of sheep;[3] occupations from which an advance to other forms of civilization was easy.

The two brothers, as often happens, grew up with very different natures: the elder, a sullen, self-willed, haughty, vindictive man; wanting the religious element in his character, and defiant even in his attitude towards God.

[1] The word *qin* in Accadian means a "possession;" but also a "slave." Lenormant, *Lettres Assyriologiques*, vol. ii. pp. 15, 16.

[2] Gen. ii. 15. (Heb.)

[3] The word translated sheep, Gen. iv. 2, includes also goats that is "the smaller cattle."

Abel, it is implied, was the very reverse; the life he led, tending meek flocks, a type of his own character. Such opposite natures—pride and humility, fierceness and meekness, could hardly live well together, for the good of the one must have seemed a constant reproach to the other.

Long brooding jealousy and dislike at last broke out into a flame, only too fatally. After a time,—literally, after days, perhaps on the Sabbath, or on the first day of the year, the brothers brought, it may be to "The presence of the Lord" between the cherubim,[1] their offerings to Jehovah; the one, perchance, to thank Him for His blessing on field and flocks; the other in grateful acknowledgment of the fruits of harvest. Cain presented, as was common in later times, an offering of the growth and fruits of his land; Abel, of the first-born of his flocks, and of the fat,—which, in after ages also, was specially esteemed in sacrifices. No altar is mentioned, but one is necessarily implied. Cain however and his offering, found no favour with God, while Abel and his were accepted, perhaps by fire descending on it from heaven. The state of heart in each towards God determined the result. Abel had loving faith[2] in God and His promise of mercy, and it is to be presumed that Cain had not; for instead of lowly sorrow at his rejection, there burned in him the fiercest bitterness and indignation, so that "his countenance fell." "Why art thou wroth?" whispered God into his soul, as He does so often to us all, "and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well is not gladness (of countenance) thine? If with heart and deed thou seekest what is good, thou wilt have joy; but if thou doest evil,—not only hast thou sadness; sin lies crouch-

[1] See McGavin's *Scripture Characters*, p. 22.

[2] Heb. xi. 4.

ing, like a wild beast, at the door, to spring on thee and master thee, who shouldst master it."[1] But the proud heart kept its grudge sullenly, and, in a fit of passion soon after embrued the hands of the unhappy one in his brother's blood.

Some of the legends of the death of Abel are very touching. One day, says one of them, he was asleep on a mountain, and Cain took a stone and crushed his head. Then he threw the corpse on his back, and carried it about, not knowing what to do with it; but he saw two crows fighting, and one killed the other, on which the crow that lived dug a hole in the earth with his beak, and buried the dead bird. But Cain said, "I shall learn sense from this bird; I, too, will bury my brother in the ground." And he did so. "After Abel was slain," says another, "the dog which had kept his sheep guarded his body, and Adam and Eve sat beside it and knew not what to do. Then said a raven, whose friend was dead, 'I will teach Adam a lesson,' and he dug a hole in the soil, and laid his friend there, and covered him up. And when Adam saw it, he said to Eve, 'We will do the same with Abel,' and God rewarded the raven for this, by promising that none should ever injure its young, that it should always have meat in abundance,

[1] Dillmann's and Ewald's Translations. See also Ges. *Thes.*, 714, p. 1259. Kamphausen (*Studien und Kritiken*, 1860, p. 120) paraphrases the passage as follows: "God thinks nothing of the outward worth of the gift, whether you bring what you think better than you have now offered, or present only thy field-fruits which you wrongly think have caused your rejection by their not being acceptable. God looks only at the heart. Guide thyself by this in the future. But your heart, as your conscience tells you, is already so corrupt, that sin like a fierce beast threatens presently to destroy thee altogether." See Lenormant's *Origines*, p. 169.

and that its prayer for rain should be immediately answered."[1]

Nothing could mark more vividly the progress of evil in the human heart than Cain's bearing after his crime, of which banishment from the home of Adam was the punishment. The land of Nod, to which he directed his steps, has been thought to be some remote eastern part of Asia, but even this is simply conjecture. The most we know is that it was on the east of Eden. Thither he carried with him a sign by which he should feel himself safe from the avenger of blood, but what it was we cannot tell. Some say that his tongue turned white, others that he had a particular dress assigned him; some that his face grew black; but others that he became covered with hair and that a horn grew out of his forehead. "The Holy One took one of the twenty-two letters which are in the law," says Rabbi Johanan, "and wrote it on the arm of Cain." Another Rabbi, however, puts it more touchingly, that the sign was a symbol of pardon set by God on his brow, after his deep penitence and contrition. Gesenius, less imaginatively, but more practically, translates it simply, that "God *gave* him a sign."[2]

The expulsion from Eden was already an event so distant, that children born to Adam, or, perhaps, even to his children, had grown into manhood, and a community had gradually been formed. A band from this fled with the banished one to Nod, the land of "exile," and there the insecurity of their position led to the first gathering into town life; which was now the more necessary, since the ground had been cursed as regarded Cain, and he had been doomed to be a wanderer and a fugitive in the earth. He hoped, it may be, to mitigate his lot by the

[1] *Pirke R. Eliezer*, c. xxi. *Koran*, cap. v. [2] *Thesaurus*, p. 119.

fixity and protection of a central settlement. Poets have described the first city as vying with the glories of Babylon or Nineveh, but it is far more likely that a very lowly ideal would be nearer the truth. Macaulay[1] imagines it to have been very magnificent.

> From all its threescore gates the light
> Of gold and steel afar were thrown;
> Two hundred cubits rose, in height,
> The outer wall of polished stone.
> On the top was ample space
> For a gallant chariot race.
> Near either parapet a bed
> Of the richest mould was spread.
> Where, amidst flowers of every scent and hue,
> Rich orange trees, and palms, and giant cedars grew.

Menials and guards; marble cisterns foaming with wine at great feasts; troops of dancing girls; chosen captains arrayed in glittering panoply, and all the splendour of a magnificent court, with armies, slaves, painted galleys, and the thousand wondrous details of Oriental greatness exalt the glory of its builder. At the marriage of his daughter Ahirad with the eldest born son of Seth, the royal halls display an—

> ——endless avenue of light,
> The bowers of tulip, rose, and palm,
> The thousand cressets fed with balm,
> The silken vests, the boards piled high
> With amber, gold, and ivory;
> The crystal fount, whence sparkling flow
> The richest wines o'er beds of snow,
> The walls where blaze in living dyes
> The king's three hundred victories.
> * * * * *
> With naked swords and shields of gold,
> Stood the seven princes of the tribes of Nod;

[1] *The Marriage of Tirzah and Ahirad.*

Upon an ermine carpet lay
Two tiger cubs in furious play,
Beneath the emerald throne where sat the signed of God.[1]

But this, doubtless, is mere poetical license. It is much more likely that "the city" was simply an aggregate of huts or tents, strengthened against attack from wild beasts by a rude stockade.[2]

A few names and one or two isolated and brief notices comprise all we really know of Cain and his descendants. Scripture had for its object to trace the development of the kingdom of God; not the history of outside nations. But the little recorded speaks of a condition far removed from the "degradation" which some scientific men have assumed as that of the first man. Instead of burrowing in the ground, or living in hollow trees or caves, and sustaining themselves on the meanest subsistence, Cain's tilling the ground implies the use of corn and other cultivated plants; while Abel's sacrifice, and offering the fat as the selected portion, hints at the rest being taken as food; for the remains of sacrifices have in all ages been consumed by the offerers. Jewish and Mohammedan legends alike, refer the gift of the corn plants to the pity of God on Adam's repentance; Gabriel, it is said, having been sent to him with wheat from Paradise, and having taught him how to sow and reap it and make bread.[3] He showed him besides, continues the legend, how to slay a lamb in the name of God, to shear off the wool and skin the carcass, and then instructed Eve to spin and weave the wool.

It may be that the legend of Cain's repentance finds

[1] The "sign" Macaulay paints as a "fierce and blood-red light," like a star, which blazed on Cain's "ample forehead white."

[2] Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1005.

[3] Baring Gould's *Old Testament Legends*, vol. i. p. 56.

corroboration in the name of his first-born son Enoch, or Hanoch, which comes from two roots, "to teach," and "to consecrate." Perhaps the unhappy man, like many an ungodly parent since, wished that, whatever he was himself, his son at least should be religious. It may be that he "consecrated" him to the God against whom he himself had so grievously sinned. But, on the other hand, the name may simply refer to Hanoch's being the first to teach men the culture of city life, or the elements of physical knowledge. Irad,[1] "the swift one," who comes next, points perhaps to a hunter's life. Mehujael, "the stricken of God," hints darkly at further judgments for deepening corruption; but Methusael, in strong contrast, brings before us one who could be known as the "Champion of El;" as if, even among the race of Cain, God had not left Himself without a witness. But with Lamech, "the striker down," "the wild man," the gleam of light once more fades; as even in those days the grace seen in the father too often disappears in the child. A new floodgate of evil is now opened, for with Lamech begins polygamy. One wife had been created for Adam, and, hitherto, had been the rule; but "the wild man" takes two, and thus introduces a usage which, more than any other, corrupts society where it prevails. That it should have been thus ascribed to the race of Cain is significant; for though it afterwards existed in Israel, it was always the exception. The law permitted, but did not favour it; and even kings were forbidden to have many wives.[2] Lamech's family history gives us a momentary glimpse into these long dead ages. His one wife, Adah, shows in her name that "beauty" had already asserted its power; but that of his other wife, Zillah, seems to hint at the light from Eden having still lingered in a measure

[1] Yirad, Gen. iv. 14. [2] Deut. xvii. 17.

even in Nod, for it appears to mean that her "shade" or protector is none other than God. Such a shade was, indeed, sorely needed in those days of deepening evil, and it may be she sought it even amidst such an ungodly race.

Abel had already kept flocks, but only of sheep and goats, and had tended them in the pastures around his father's dwelling. But now, a son of Adah, Jabal,—"the wanderer"—took to a purely pastoral life; which involved his passing from place to place with his herds of cattle, and it may be of asses and camels. Among these he necessarily had to live, and hence arose the moveable tent, which nomads have used ever since. Her second son—Jubal, "the player,"—his very name an imitation of the lingering sound of his notes,—added to the charms of life the wondrous power of music; learned, perhaps in the quiet shepherd life his brother had begun. "He was the father," says the record, "of all such as use the lyre and the pipe." The sweet vibrations of stringed instruments and the soft tones of the flute, in its earliest simplicity, must thus have waked delight in the very first generations of men. But Zillah, also, had a son; one, possibly of many; whose gifts to the race, if in one light of priceless value; in their abuse were to be the symbol of immeasurable evil. Tubal-Cain, "the smith," was "a sharpener or hammerer out[1] of all cutting instruments of copper and iron;" the coulter of the plough, it may be, on the one hand, but on the other, the sword and spear. It is in keeping with the first mention of deadly weapons that their worst use is noticed as presently boasted. Armed by his son's invention, Lamech "the wild man," the picture of a violent and darkening age, and the pitiless hero of the revengeful of after days, in

[1] Ges., *Thes.*, p. 530.

his joy at his new weapons, cries aloud to his wives, in words which seem to have come down to us as a fragment of ancient song—

> Ada and Zillah![1] hear my speech,
> Ye wives of Lamech, mark my words:
> I have killed a man in return for a blow;
> A young man, in return for a stroke;
> Cain, they say, if killed, was to be revenged seven times,
> But Lamech (as this may show) will be revenged seventy times seven.[2]

The curtain falls on the race of Cain with this picture of savage ferocity, glorying in revenge, and merciless in its fury. What nations sprang from this earliest separation of the human family is not told us; for there is no hint, even in the names of Cain's descendants that have survived.

Scripture was more concerned with the story of another branch of the great stream of life; that of the race of Seth, whose name appears as that of a third son of Adam. His name, "the replacer," speaks of the joy of Eve at the birth of another child, in the room of the gentle Abel; and she had the still greater joy to find that he grew up to inherit Abel's spirit. In due time he himself had a son,

[1] Condemnation of revenge and also of polygamy is the moral lesson of this snatch of fierce song. Adam has one wife; this descendant of Cain introduces the custom of having more than one, and that, fitly, on the eve of the Deluge. There is here a formal condemnation of this sin, just as in Gen. ii. 24, a Divine sanction is given to monogamy.

[2] See Ewald's *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 382. I have paraphrased rather than closely translated the words. Gesenius (*Thes.*) translates it, "I have killed a man on account of a wound inflicted on me, a young man for the blow (he gave me)." S. de Sacy's version is, "I have slain a man because he had wounded me, and a young man because he had bruised me."

Enosh, "a man," who was destined to mark a permanent and mighty advance in the future religious history of the world. Eve had spoken of God as Elohim; with Enosh men began to worship him as Jehovah.[1] Cain and Abel had worshipped with offerings and sacrifices; perhaps in some rude sanctuary, outside the door of which sin still crouched, in secret, to spring on them again. Enosh introduces public supplication; for we can scarcely doubt that men had already called upon God in private. The form was now, once again, quickened by the spirit of religion, which was henceforth owned as not only a ceremonial act, but an inner life.

The descendants of Adam through Seth are given in ten generations; but when we remember that, in the genealogies of our Lord, St. Matthew reckons only twenty-eight steps from David to the Incarnation, while St. Luke gives us forty-three, it is easy to fancy that many may have been omitted in this case also. To Enosh, we are told, was born Cainan, "my child;" to Cainan, Mahalaleel, "El (God) in His glory;" to him, Jared,[2] perhaps "the swift one;" to him, again, Enoch, the same name as that of a son of Cain; but in this case "the teacher," "the consecrated one," in a worthy sense; for while tradition ascribes to him the instruction of mankind in human science, Scripture speaks of him as so exceptionally holy, that, like Elijah afterwards, he was spared the pains of death, and taken while still alive, to God. Like Abel he died early, for shortness of life is far from marking Divine displeasure. "He was not found," says the sacred

[1] Gen. iv. 26. See *Speaker's Bible; Tuch; Knobel; Hupfeld; Oëhler; Delitzsch; Hofmann.* The word translated "the Lord" in our A. V. is always "Jehovah" in the Hebrew.

[2] Jared is different in spelling from Irad the grandson of Cain, but they seem to come from the same root.

writer, "because God had translated him;" words which evidently imply a belief in our immortality, at least among the race of Seth, from the very first.[1]

If Enoch's life was shorter than that of any other patriarch, the blessing on the household of the righteous was abundantly illustrated in Methuselah, who is recorded as having lived 969 years. Whether we are to think that the original vitality of the human frame faded only by slow degrees; or whether there was something salubrious in the air of the ages after Eden, has often been asked, but can never be answered. Some have fancied that the immense lives ascribed to the antediluvians imply that each name represents a tribe, the lives of whose leading members are added together; others have understood the years to mean only months; while others have sought to prove that from Adam to Abraham the year had no more than three months, from Abraham to Joseph eight, and from Joseph's time twelve months, as at present.[2] But such explanations have no sufficient warrant, and it is perhaps best, on the whole, to keep in mind what Bishop Harold Browne has pointed out; that "numbers and dates are liable in the course of ages to become obscured and exaggerated."[3] It is quite possible that some of the early Rabbis, desirous of emulating the fabled age ascribed by heathen nations to their heroes and demigods, may have added to the Bible figures, so as to secure the patriarchs an equal honour. Our present bodies, certainly, could not live

[1] The Book of Enoch, from which I have elsewhere quoted freely, is sufficient proof of the superstitious reverence in which the great patriarch's name was held even by the later Jews.

[2] Von Bohlen's *Die Genesis*, pp. 65–67. *Aids to Faith*, p. 270 Kalisch, *On Genesis*, p. 110. Knobel, *Die Genesis*, p. 69.

[3] *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. p. 62.

more than two hundred years, at the very most, from the decay of one part after another, and hence we must either take Bishop Browne's solution of antediluvian longevity, or suppose that exceptional circumstances in the first ages produced exceptional results.

Methusaleh, "the man of the spear" or "of the bow," a strange name for the son of the heavenly minded Enoch, is followed by a second Lamech; but whether his name, "the wild man," or "the plunderer," throws any light on his character and life is not told us. All we know is, that from him sprang one who was to find favour with God in the midst of a world from which good had well-nigh departed. It is, indeed, perhaps to this well-nigh universal corruption that Methuselah and Lamech owe their names. It was a sad time. The earth, cursed by God, bore its harvests, as now, only after weary toil. The almost spontaneous fruitfulness of Eden had been lost, and Lamech might well look forward to the help to be rendered by his newborn son Noah, as "a comfort" to him, in lightening his toil. Little, however, did he dream what that son should see ere he died![1]

[1] It is very curious to notice how widely the number ten prevails as that of the first generations of men. The Bible reckons ten from Creation to the Flood. The Iranians had ten kings, "the men of the ancient law" who lived on the pure homa or immortal draught of the gods, and kept their purity. Among the Hindoos there are ten "Fathers," the children of Brahma. Among the Germans and Scandinavians there were ten ancestors of Odin. Among the Chinese, ten emperors shared divine honour before the dawn of history, and the Arabs have ten fabled kings of the region between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. *

The similarity in the two lists of the first generations of men through Adam by Cain on the one side, and through Seth by

* Lenormant, *Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne*, vol. i. p. 19. *Contemp. Rev.* (April 1880), p. 570.

Enos on the other, has often attracted attention. They stand as follows:

Through Adam.	Through Enos.
Adam=The man.	Enos=The man.
Qaïn (Cain).	Qenan (Cainan).
Hanoch (Enoch).	Mahalaleel.
Yirad (Irad).	Yered (Jared).
Me'huiaël (Mehujael).	Hanoch (Enoch).
Methushaël (Methusael).	Methushela'h (Methuselah).
Lemech (Lamech).	Lemech (Lamech).
Yabal. Yubal. Thubal.	Noah.
(Jabal). (Jubal). (Tubal).	Shem. Ham. Yapheth (Japheth).

Lenormant points out that these names have an entirely different meaning in the two lists: an unfavourable one in that through Cain; a favourable one in that through Seth. Thus Me'huiael is, he says, "smitten of God," and corresponds to Mahalaleel, "praise or splendour of God." Yirad, the "fugitive," is the counterpart of Yered, "descent," or rather "service." Hanoch means, in both lists, "initiator," "teacher," but in the one list it is initiator into material and profane arts; in the other, into religious truth and spiritual life.—*Contemporary Review* (April 1880), p. 567.

In his *Origines de l'Histoire*, Lenormant finds in the name of the Assyrian month Sivan—the month of bricks—and the fact that its zodiacal sign is The Twins, a reminiscence of Cain's fratricide, and of the founding of the first city. Phenician tradition speaks of the first men as having invented bricks mixed with chopped straw, and dried in the sun. M. Lenormant collects a striking list of cities in antiquity, with the founding of which the murder of a brother is associated. He thinks Cain's offering was rejected and Abel's accepted because the latter was a sacrifice; the other only an offering. The word "Robetz"=lieth (Gen. iv. 7), he tells us, is related to the Assyrian "Rabitz," a class of demons who hide and spring on their victim. Evil spirits were imagined as often lying hidden at the door of a house, ready to leap on a man when he came out unsuspectingly. *See* pp. 140–171.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FLOOD.

IT is one of the most remarkable, and at the same time pleasing, corroborations of the early narratives of Scripture, that they are found to be repeated, in substance, often with surprising exactness of detail, by the traditions and primitive records of the most widely separate countries and races. This is especially seen in the echoes of the story of the Flood, which meet us from every age and region.

The notice of this appalling and unique catastrophe, which has thus imprinted itself on the memory of the world from the most ancient times, is fitly introduced by a statement of the condition of things among mankind, which drew down such an awful punishment. Evil had grown rampant, and threatened utterly to extirpate good from the world. The immediate cause of this portentous corruption is, moreover, stated; though in language so dark, from its metaphorical expression, that endless controversy has risen as to the meaning of some essential words. "There were giants on the earth," it is said, "in those days;" but the name means only "famous" men, whether for stature or deeds, though they may have been of unusual size. Some races, especially when the enervating influences of an artificial civilization have not

deteriorated them, have shown this peculiarity in historic times; as for example the Cimbri and Teutons of antiquity, and the Pomeranians of the present day. It is added that "the sons of God" allied themselves with "the daughters of men," and that their children became mighty and renowned men.[1] By the "giants," or "nephilim," seem to be meant a race of violent chiefs, who made themselves great names by deeds of war, filling the earth with violence. They may have been of gigantic size, like those to whom the same name is afterwards applied in Palestine,[2] but it is not necessarily implied.[3] Opinions have differed greatly as to the meaning of the name "Sons of God," or rather, of "Elohim." The Rabbis, as was natural, from their love of the marvellous, took for granted that the fallen angels are meant; since "nephilim" is derived from the verb "to fall." Hence Apocryphal Jewish literature assumes this constantly, while not a few writers of the most opposite schools still support this explanation, which, nevertheless, seems fanciful and ungrounded. The giants are not said to have been "the sons of Elohim," and their name may as fitly be explained as referring to their "falling upon" their fellow men, as by any mysterious connection with

[1] Gen. vi. 4.

[2] Deut. ii. 10 ff., 20; iii. 11. Amos ii. 9; etc.

[3] It has been suggested, by Movers and others, including even a writer in the *Dictionary of the Bible*, that the application of the same name to a race in Palestine, argues that they were descendants from the "giants" of Gen. vi. But, as Ewald rightly notes, it is not their historical name, but one simply pointing out a physical characteristic, not confined to any one people. If we were to call the Patagonians "giants," it surely would not make them descendants of those so-called in Genesis. There is hence no proof from this, as has been fancied, that others besides Noah and his family survived the Flood.

the rebel angels. Nor does the name "sons of Elohim," necessarily refer to angels at all; for the word Elohim is used, elsewhere, in Scripture, of men. Thus, in Psalm lxxxii. 1, we read that God "judges in the midst of the Elohim," who are shown in the next verse to be those who "judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked."[1] The name is evidently given them from their office; in which they represented, in Israel, the supreme judge of the nation—Jehovah. Jewish interpreters generally adopt this meaning of the passage; believing that the "great" or "mighty" sons of Cain are contrasted with the lowlier daughters of Seth.[2] It is, moreover, very doubtful if the word be ever applied in the Old Testament to angels.[3] On the other hand, it is continually used of heathen idols, and hence it may well point in this particular case to intermarriages between the adherents of idolatry[4] and the daughters of the race of Seth, and a consequent spread of heathenism, far and

[1] Elohim is applied to judges in 1 Sam. ii. 25. Bunsen, *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 52, repudiates the idea of angels being intended by the "sons of God," as not in any measure an Asiatic, far less a Hebrew conception. It is, he says, simply a piece of Greek Polytheism. Lord Macaulay, in his poem, *The Marriage of Tirzah and Ahirad*, has the same idea as Hirsch. *See* next page.

[2] Ruetschi, in *Herzog*, vol. xiii. p. 40.

[3] See the word, in 8th edition of Gesenius' *Lexicon*, 1878.

[4] The use of "son" for "disciple," or "worshipper" is common in Scripture. Thus, "the sons of the prophets." The Jews are often called "the sons of God," Isaiah i. 2; xliii. 6. Jer. iii. 14, 19. It was the same with other nations. Benhadad means the son or worshipper of Hadad or Adod, the chief divinity of the Syrians. The disciples of the Magi in Persia were called their "sons," and the same usage was common among the Greeks. The Syrians also spoke of the sons, or disciples, of Bardesanes. The godly are called in Malachi ii. 15, the children, or seed of Elohim.

near, with its attendant violence and moral debasement.[1] If, however, by "the sons of Elohim" we understand the worshippers of Jehovah, the "daughters of men" would mean those of the race of Cain. This interpretation, indeed, is now very generally adopted, and seems the most natural. We should, then, read, "the sons of the godly race" took wives of "the daughters of men."[2]

The children of such marriages sadly increased the prevailing corruption. They became "*gibborim*," or fierce and cruel chiefs, filling the world with blood and tumult.[3] It was to prevent the final triumph of evil, Scripture tells us, that the Deluge was sent from God.

That such a terrible and all-destructive visitation happened, is corroborated, as has been said, by the traditions of all races. Among these the most famous, perhaps, are the Chaldean, which are preserved in fragments of Berosus, a priest of Babylon, who lived about two hundred and sixty years before Christ;[4] and also on the tablets recovered from the ruins of Nineveh.

The account of Berosus is, briefly, as follows: "The great Deluge took place under Xisuthros. The god Ea appeared to him in a dream, and announced that on the

[1] See Schenkel, in *Bibel Lexicon*, art. Nephilim.

[2] Hirsch, *Der Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 121.

[3] Hirsch's explanation of "My Spirit shall not always strive with men," etc. is worth notice. He translates it, "My Spirit shall not always judge in man." That is, Conscience, which is, as Hirsch puts it, the breath of God, will more and more lose its power in the earth. Evil will more and more prevail, because men are only flesh, now—that is, corrupt. Yet I shall delay my wrath for 120 years. *Der Pentateuch*, on the verse.

[4] Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, art. Berosus. Bunsen in his *Bibel Urkunden*, quotes the passages in full, from Eusebius and Syncellus. They are given at length, also, by Lenormant, in his *Essay on the Deluge*.

15th of the month of Daisios (a little before the summer solstice), all men should perish by a flood. He was therefore to collect all that was consigned to writing, and bury it at Sippara—the city of the Sun. There, he was to build a vessel and to enter into it with his family and dearest friends; and he was to cause animals, birds and quadrupeds, to enter with him, taking sufficient provision. He was, moreover, to prepare everything for navigation. And when Xisuthros asked in what direction he should steer, he was told—towards the gods—and enjoined to pray that good might come of it for men.

"Xisuthros, on this, obeyed, and constructed a vessel five stadia long (3,033 feet 9 inches) and two broad (1,213 feet 6 inches); and having brought together all that had been ordered, went into it with his wife, his children, and his intimate friends.

"The Deluge having come, and soon going down, Xisuthros loosed some of the birds; but these, finding no food, nor place to alight, returned to the ship. A few days later he again set them free, but they returned, their feet stained with mud. Sent off a third time, they never came back. Xisuthros from this understood that the earth was bare, and having made an opening in the roof of the ship, saw that it had grounded on the top of a mountain. He then descended with his wife, his daughter, and his pilot, and having worshipped the earth, raised an altar and sacrificed to the gods. At the same moment he vanished, with those who accompanied him.

"Meanwhile, those who had remained in the vessel, finding he did not return, descended and began to seek him, calling him by name. But they saw Xisuthros no more. A voice from heaven, however, was heard, commanding that they should be pious towards the gods,

and telling them that he had received the reward of his piety, by being carried away to dwell henceforth in the midst of the gods, and that his wife, his daughter, and the pilot of the ship, shared the same honour. The voice further said that they were to return to Babylon, and dig up the writings buried at Sippara; to transmit them to after generations. The country in which they found themselves was Armenia. They, then, having heard the voice, sacrificed to the gods and returned on foot to Babylon. Of the vessel of Xisuthros, a portion is still to be found in the Gordyan Mountains in Armenia, and pilgrims bring thence asphalte which they have scraped from its fragments. It is used to keep off the influence of witchcraft."

Thus far Berosus. The version given by the cuneiform tablets is fuller. The story is related by the patriarch Khasisatra, who has been saved from the deluge, to Izdhubar, a hero, who, having been smitten with leprosy, goes to the distant land to which the gods have transported Khasisatra, to consult him as to a cure. There are three copies of the tablets on which the legend is given, all made by order of the same king of Assyria, Assurbanipal, in the seventh century B.C., from a very ancient original in the priestly library of Erech; a town founded in the early days of the first Chaldean empire. This venerable copy could not have been of later date than seventeen centuries B.C., but probably was older; so that it carries us back beyond the time of Moses, perhaps even to Abraham's day. Nor is this all, for the variations in the three existing copies prove that the one from which they were transcribed had itself been taken from a still older manuscript, of which the original text had received interlinear comments. Some of the copyists have introduced these into the

text: others have omitted them, and the narrative is thus carried back to an age which may well be believed contemporary with the survivors of the Flood itself, so that it is thus one of the oldest documents as yet known. Lenormant's translation, which embodies the latest advances of cuneiform philology, is as follows:—

"I will reveal to thee, O Izdhubar, the history of my preservation, and tell thee the decision of the gods. The town of Shurippak, which thou knowest, is on the Euphrates. It was ancient, and in it [men did not honour] the gods. I alone was a servant of the great gods. [The gods took counsel on the appeal of] Anu:—[a deluge was proposed by] Bel [and approved by Nabon, Nergal, and] Adar.

"And the God [Ea] the immutable lord—repeated this command in a dream. . . . 'Man of Shurippak—build a vessel and finish it [quickly]. I will destroy life and substance [by a deluge]. Cause thou to go up into the vessel the substance of all that has life. The vessel thou shalt build—600 cubits shall be the measure of its length, and 60 the measure of its breadth and of its height. [Launch it] thus on the ocean, and cover it with a roof.' I understood, and said to Ea, 'My lord, [the vessel] that thou commandest me to build thus, when I shall build it, young and old [shall laugh at me]. [Ea opened his mouth and] spoke; '[If they laugh at thee] thou shalt say to them, He who has insulted me [shall be punished], [for the protection of the gods] is over me.' 'I will exercise my judgment on that which is on high and that which is below. . . . Close the vessel. . . . Enter into it and draw the door of the ship toward thee. Within it, thy grain, thy furniture, thy provisions, thy riches, thy menservants, thy maidservants, and thy young people—the cattle of

the field, and the wild beasts of the plain, which I will assemble and send to thee, shall be kept behind thy door.' . . . On the fifth day [the two sides of the bark] were raised. The rafters in its covering were, in all, fourteen. I placed its roof and I covered it. I embarked in it on the sixth day; I divided its floors on the seventh, I divided the interior compartments on the eighth. I stopped up the chinks through which the water entered in. I poured on the outside three times 3,600 measures of asphalte; and three times 3,600 measures of asphalte within. Three times 3,600 men, porters, brought on their heads the chests of provisions. I kept 3,600 chests for the nourishment of my family, and the mariners divided among them twice 3,600 chests. For [provisioning] I had oxen slain; I appointed rations for each day. In [anticipation of the need of] drinks, of barrels and of wine, [I collected in quantity] like to the waters of a river; [of provisions] in quantity like to the dust of the earth. . . .

"All that I possessed I gathered together—of silver, of gold; of the substance of life of every kind. I made my servants, male and female, the cattle of the fields, the wild beasts of the plains, and the sons of the people, all ascend[into the ship].

"Shamas [the sun] fixed the moment, and he announced it in these terms: 'In the evening I will cause it to rain abundantly from heaven; enter into the vessel and close the door.' . . . When the evening of the day arrived I was afraid—I entered into my vessel and shut my door, and then confided to the pilot this dwelling, with all that it contained.

"Mu-sheri-ina-namari[1] rose from the foundations of heaven in a black cloud; Ramman[2] thundered in the

[1] A personification of rain. [2] The god of thunder.

midst of the cloud—Nabon and Shurru marched before—they marched, devastating the mountain and the plain. Nergal,[1] the powerful, dragged chastisements after him. Adar[2] advanced, overthrowing before him. The archangels of the abyss brought destruction. By their terrors they agitated the earth. The flood of Ramman swelled up to the sky, and [the earth], grown dark, became like a desert.

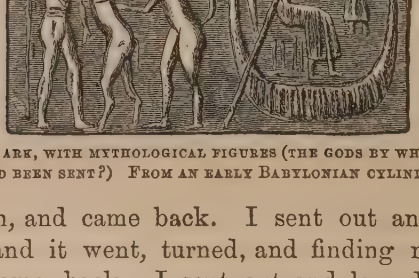
"They destroyed the living beings on the surface of the earth. The terrible Deluge swelled up towards heaven. The brother no longer saw his brother: men no longer knew each other. In heaven the gods became afraid of the waterspouts, and sought a refuge—they mounted up to the heaven of Anu.[3] The gods were stretched out motionless, pressing one against another, like dogs. Ishtar wailed like a child: the great goddess pronounced this discourse: 'Here is mankind returned into earth: and theirs is the misfortune I have announced in presence of the gods.' . . . 'I am the mother who gave birth to men, and there they are, filling the sea like the race of fishes; and the gods on their seats, by reason of that which the archangels of the abyss are doing, weep with me.' The gods on their seats were in tears, and held their lips closed, [revolving] things to come.

"Six days passed and as many nights: the wind, the waterspout and the deluge-rain were in all their strength. At the approach of the seventh day the deluge-rain grew weaker—the terrible waterspout, which had been awful as an earthquake, grew calm, the sea began to dry up, and the wind and the waterspout came to an end. I

[1] The god of war and of death.
[2] The Chaldee and Assyrian Hercules.
[3] The upper heaven of the fixed stars.

looked at the sea, attentively observing, and the whole race of men had returned to earth; the corpses floated like seaweed. I opened the window and the light smote on my face. I was seized with sadness; I sat down and wept, and the tears came over my face.

"I looked at the regions bounding the sea, towards the twelve points of the horizon, but there was no land. The vessel was borne above the land of Nizir—the mountains of Nizir arrested the vessel, and did not permit it to pass over. For six days they thus stopped it. At the approach of the seventh day I sent out and loosed a dove. The dove went, turned, and found no place



NOAH IN THE ARK, WITH MYTHOLOGICAL FIGURES (THE GODS BY WHOM THE FLOOD HAD BEEN SENT?) FROM AN EARLY BABYLONIAN CYLINDER.

to light on, and came back. I sent out and loosed a swallow; and it went, turned, and finding no place to light on, came back. I sent out and loosed a raven; the raven went, and saw the corpses on the waters; it ate, rested, turned, and came not back.

"I then sent out [the creatures in the vessel] towards the four winds, and offered a sacrifice. I raised the pile of my burnt-offering on the peak of the mountain. Seven by seven I laid the measured vessels,[1] and, beneath, I spread rushes, cedar-wood, and juniper. The gods were seized with the desire of it—with a bene-

[1] Vessels or vases with measured contents, for the offering.

volent desire of it:—they assembled like flies above the master of the sacrifice. From afar, in approaching, the great goddess raised the great zones that Anu made for the glory of the gods.[1] These gods, luminous as crystal, I will never leave—I prayed, in that day, that I might never leave them. 'Let the gods come to my sacrificial pile! But never may Bel come to it, for he did not master himself, but he made the waterspout for the Deluge, and he has numbered men for the pit.'

"From far, in drawing near, Bel saw the vessel and stopped. He was filled with anger against the gods and against the heavenly archangels.

"'No one shall come out alive! No man shall be preserved from the abyss.' Adar opened his mouth and said—he said to the warrior Bel, 'Who other than Ea should have formed this resolution; for Ea possesses knowledge and [he preserves] all.' Ea opened his mouth and spake: he said to the warrior Bel, 'O thou, herald of the gods, warrior—as thou didst not master thyself, thou hast made the waterspout of the deluge. Let the sinner carry the weight of his sins; the blasphemer the weight of his blasphemy. Please thyself with this good pleasure and it shall never be infringed; faith in it [shall] never [be violated]. Instead of thy making a new deluge, let lions and hyænas appear and reduce the number of men; let there be famine, and let the earth be [devastated]; let Dibbara[2] appear, and let men be mown down. I have not revealed the decision of the great gods: it is Khasisatra who interpreted a dream and comprehended what the gods had decided.'

"Then, when his resolve [to destroy the remnant of men] was arrested, Bel entered into the vessel, and took

[1] This is a metaphorical expression for the rainbow.

[2] The god of epidemics.

my hand, and made me rise. He made my wife rise and place herself at my side. He walked round us and stopped short. He approached our group. 'Until now Khasisatra has been mortal, but now, he and his wife are going to be carried away to live like the gods, and he will live afar, at the mouth of the rivers.' They carried me away, and established me in a remote place, at the mouth of the stream."

Such is the latest and most perfect translation of this wonderful legend, from which only a few words of repetition have been omitted. The points of resemblance and of contrast with the Bible narrative, both in it and the shorter version of Berosus, appear on the surface. Nothing is said in Scripture of the burial of writings, and there is no trace of the polytheism which disfigures both accounts. The length of the ark in Berosus is, to its breadth, as 5 to 2; in Genesis, it is as 6 to 1; in the tablets, as 10 to 1. In Berosus and the tablets, instead of a simple patriarch like Noah, we have a king; and instead of a single family alone being saved, we have friends, servants, and young people in the ark, with all the royal treasures. In the tablets the deluge lasted only six days and nights, in Genesis it lasted forty days and nights, and it was, in all, a hundred and fifty days before the waters had disappeared. In the Bible it is said that seven pairs of clean beasts were taken and one pair of unclean; in the Chaldean accounts there is no mention of clean or unclean. Shamas (the Sun god), is represented as saying "Enter into the vessel and close the door." The Bible says, "And Jehovah shut him in." The Chaldean account has a pilot; there is none in that of Genesis; but in both the ark is coated with bitumen. According to the tablets, there were let loose a dove, a swallow, and a raven; in Genesis, a raven and a dove. In the tablets and Genesis,

alike, the rainbow appears as a sign of Divine satisfaction with a sacrifice offered after the flood had passed off, and in both there is an assurance that the earth should never again be visited with the same form of destruction. The issue, however, is different with regard to those saved. On the tablets and in Berosus some are taken away by the gods; in Genesis they remain alive to repeople the earth. The Chaldean accounts had evidently mingled the story of Enoch with that of Noah.

We have thus an independent tradition, of the highest antiquity, recording the fact of a great deluge having destroyed all the human race except a favoured few, and that as a punishment for their sins. But this tradition, though like that of Scripture in some points, is yet distinct from it in its whole spirit and tone; for though both come from the same region and from times equally remote, they have done so through different races.

In the tract, "On the Syrian Goddess," formerly attributed to Lucian, we learn the version of this Chaldean tradition which was current among the Syrians, and through them introduced to the West, among the Greeks and Romans. "When I asked how old this temple was (that of the Syrian goddess, at Hieropolis)," says the writer, "and to what goddess in their opinion it had been consecrated, I received many explanations, in secret and openly; some out of the way, but others at one with the Greek opinion. Most said that Deucalion from Scythia, in whose days the terrible flood happened, had founded it. Now I have heard the history of Deucalion from the Greeks, who say that the present race of men is not the first,—since the first had been utterly destroyed,—but had sprung from Deucalion. The original race, they say, were violent people, guilty of much that was wrong; keeping neither their oath nor observing hospitality, and

showing pity on no one; for which they were sorely punished. The earth in fact opened and poured out much water; terrible rains fell; the floods rose over their banks, and the sea widened its shores, till the waters covered all things and the human race perished. Deucalion alone survived, on account of his wisdom and piety, to restore the family of mankind. The way he escaped was this. He built a great ark, in which he put his wives and children, and into which he also himself went. At the same time there came swine, horses, lions, serpents, and all other beasts which the earth nourished, and he received them all into the ark. There, they did him no harm, for there was a great friendship among all, which Jupiter put in their hearts, and thus they lived in the ark as long as the waters lasted. This is the story the Greeks tell of Deucalion. The Hieropolitans add to it something very wonderful. They say that a great cleft opened in their land which swallowed up all the waters, and that, after this, Deucalion built altars and raised a temple to Juno, over the cleft. I have seen it; it is very narrow and situated under the temple. Whether it was once large and had now shrunk, I do not know; but I have seen it and it is quite small. Now-a-days they bring water twice a year to the temple; not only the priests, but a great multitude of people from all Syria, Arabia, and from beyond the Euphrates, going to the sea and fetching it. They then pour it out first in the temple, from which it runs off into the cleft. They do this, they say, in obedience to a command of Deucalion, in remembrance of the calamity suffered and of the escape vouchsafed."[1]

A passage in the Bhagawata, one of the sacred books of India, is no less striking. The whole earth, we are told, was covered with a deluge, and all men destroyed

[1] Rosenmüller's *Das Alte und Neue Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 27.

except the then reigning king, with seven holy men and their wives. And it happened in this way. The king was making his legal washing one day in a river, when the god Vishnu appeared to him and told him that in seven days all creatures who had done him wrong should be destroyed by a flood. "Thou, however," the god continued, "shalt be saved in a roomy, wonderfully built vessel. Take therefore all kinds of wholesome plants and grain for food, and also the seven holy men; your own wives, and a pair of all kinds of animals. Go without fear into the ark, for thou shalt see me face to face, and all thy questions will be answered." After seven days the sea rose over its bounds, and then the prince saw a great vessel floating on the waters. Into this he entered, following carefully the commands of Vishnu, who, in the form of a great fish, dragged along the ark by means of a great sea-serpent, which he used as a rope. A demon had stolen the Vedas from Brahma, but after the flood Vishnu killed him, and having got the Vedas back, taught the king heavenly wisdom from them, and appointed him to be the king of the new world.[1]

There are, in all, four versions of the tradition of the Flood known in Indian literature, but it has been pointed out by Eugene Burnouf, that it does not occur in the Vedic hymns, the most ancient Sanscrit writings, and that it seems to have been a foreign importation, of Semitic, or rather Babylonian origin, in very remote, but, still, historical times. The metamorphosis of Vishnu into a fish is, itself, a strong corroboration of this, for there is no trace of fish worship in India, and no similar legend

[1] This is the version given by Rosenmüller. A shorter one of a more heathen tone, has been given by Max Müller from another Indian source. See *Contemporary Review* (Nov., 1879), p 477.

or allusion in its mythology. But the fish-god was a prominent deity in Babylon. The image of the god Ea who plays so prominent a part in the Chaldean legends of the Flood, almost invariably combines the form of a man and a fish, like the god Dagon, which was an importation from Mesopotamia to the shores of Palestine. The similarity of the Indian tradition to that of Genesis, in the numbers given, is striking. Vishnu gives the warning, "In seven days all creatures shall be destroyed," while Scripture says, "Yet seven days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth." "In seven days the sea rose above its bounds," says the Purana; "after seven days the waters of the flood were upon the earth," says Genesis. In the same way, on the tablets, the flood begins on the evening of the seventh day, and commences to abate after seven days. Such a repeated use of the same number seems a further reason for believing the Indian tradition to have come from the same region as the legend on the tablets and the account in Genesis.

But if this tradition came originally from the Euphrates, those of other races show versions so entirely distinct, that they cannot be held to have been borrowed from Hebrew or Chaldean sources. All the Aryan races had their own—the ancient Persians, the Greeks, the Celts, the Scandinavians. "They say," says Plutarch, repeating the Greek tradition, "that a dove let out from the ark by Deucalion, showed by its return to him that the waters were abating; and again, by its not returning, that the skies had cleared." M. E. Naville has translated[1] from an ancient Egyptian tomb-inscription, a striking narrative, showing that that strange race also had their tradition of a destruction of mankind,

[1] *Transactions of The Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. iv. pp. 1–19.

except a very few, designed to reproduce a better race. The calamity comes on account of human corruption. An expiatory sacrifice after the visitation appeases the Divine wrath, and a solemn covenant is made between men and the Deity, who swears never to destroy them again. In these points the resemblance to the Bible account of the Flood is very striking, nor is it strange that the Egyptians, to whom the inundation of the Nile was the symbol of prosperity and health, should have changed the mode of the Divine punishment from that of a flood to a direct destruction from above, or have made the rise of the Nile a sign that the Divine anger was past.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FLOOD (*continued*).

IT is a singular confirmation of the Deluge as a great historical event, that it is thus found engraven in the memories of all the great nations of antiquity; but it is still more striking to find it holding a place in the traditions of the most widely spread races of America, and indeed of the world at large. Thus Alfred Maury, a French writer of immense erudition, speaks of it as "a very remarkable fact, that we find in America traditions of the Deluge coming infinitely nearer those of the Bible and of the Chaldean religion than the legends of any people of the old world."

The ancient inhabitants of Mexico had many variations of the legend among their various tribes. In some, rude paintings were found representing the Deluge. Not a few believed that a vulture was sent out of the ship, and that, like the raven of the Chaldean tablets, it did not return, but fed on the dead bodies of the drowned. Other versions say that a humming bird alone, out of many birds sent off, returned with a branch covered with leaves in its beak. Among the Cree Indians of the present day in the Arctic circle, in North America, Sir John Richardson found similar traces of the great tradition. "The Crees," he says, "spoke of a universal Deluge,

caused by an attempt of the fish to drown one who was a kind of demigod, with whom they had quarrelled. Having constructed a raft, he embarked with his family, and all kinds of birds and beasts. After the flood had continued some time, he ordered several waterfowls to dive to the bottom, but they were all drowned. A musk rat, however, having been sent on the same errand, was more successful, and returned with a mouthful of mud." From other tribes in every part of America, travellers have brought many variations of the same world-wide tradition, nor are even the scattered islands of the Great Southern Ocean without versions of their own. In Tahiti, the natives used to tell of the god Ruahatu having told two men, "who were at sea, fishing—Return to the shore, and tell men that the earth will be covered with water, and all the world will perish. To-morrow morning go to the islet called Toamarama; it will be a place of safety for you and your children. Then Ruahatu caused the sea to cover the lands. All were covered, and all men perished except the two and their families."[1] In other islands we find legends recording the building of an altar after the Deluge; the collection of pairs of all the domestic animals, to save them, while the Fiji islanders give the number of the human beings saved, as *eight*.[2]

Thus, the story of the Deluge is a universal tradition among all branches of the human family, with the one exception, as Lenormant[3] tells us, of the black. How

[1] Gaussin, *Du Dialecte de Tahiti*, etc., p. 255. See also Ellis' *Polynesian Researches*, vol. ii. pp. 57-59.

[2] Hardwick's *Christ and other Masters*, pt. ii; p. 185.

[3] M. Lenormant is one of the most learned men of France, a devout believer in Christianity, and a resolute defender of the Scriptures. "Africa," he says, "has no traditions of the flood."

else could this arise but from the ineradicable remembrance of a real and terrible event. It must, besides, have happened so early in the history of mankind that the story of it could spread with the race from their original cradle, for the similarity of the versions over the earth point to a common source. It is, moreover, preserved in its fullest and least diluted form among the three great races, which are the ancestors of the three great families of mankind—the Aryans, from whom sprang the populations of India, Persia, and Europe; the Turanians; and the Semitic stock, who were the progenitors of the Jew, the Arab, and other related races, including the Cushite and Egyptian. These, it is striking to note, were the specially civilized peoples of the early world, and must have learned the story before they separated from their common home in Western Asia. "Like certain families of the vegetable kingdom," says Humboldt thoughtfully, in reference to this subject, "which, notwithstanding the diversity of climate and the influence of heights, retain the impression of a common type, these traditions of nations display everywhere the same physiognomy, and preserve features of resemblance that fill us with astonishment. How many different tongues, belonging to branches that appear completely distinct, transmit to us the same fact! The bases of the traditions concerning races that are destroyed, and the renewal of nature, scarcely vary; though every nation gives them a local colouring. In the great continents as in the smallest islands of the Pacific Ocean, it is always on the loftiest and nearest mountain that the remains of the human race have been saved; and this event appears the more recent, in proportion as the nations are uncultivated, and as the knowledge they have of their own existence has not a very remote date."

The precise shape of the ark has been the subject of no little controversy. The Hebrew word for it is apparently Egyptian,[1] and is translated in the Greek version by the word for a wooden box, chest, or coffer,[2] while in the Vulgate it is called an ark; that is, a chest. The Egyptian word means a chest, or coffer, or sarcophagus; so that all agree in the idea of a vessel four cornered, like a box; if we are to understand them literally. J. D. Michaelis, however, with his delight in new opinions and his vivid acuteness, was very unwilling to think it could have been a mere chest, "which could hardly float on the sea, and stood in imminent danger of being whirled round and round by the waves." "Kibōtos —the Greek word"—says he, "had, assuredly, various meanings at Alexandria. For example, a part of the harbour bore that name, but in common Greek it especially means a coffin or sarcophagus. Could it have meant in Alexandria, first a sarcophagus, and then a Nile-boat of about the proportions after which Noah's ship was built? The old Egyptians bore corpses on boats to the place of burial; the boatman was called Charon, and the fable of Charon's boat is in some degree of Egyptian origin, while the name—Charon's Sea—still survives in Egypt. Still more, whoever has seen a mummy knows that the coffin or chest in which it lies is like a long boat, though from the thickness of the wood in the middle it has not the exact proportions of Noah's ark. Perhaps the Greek translators meant by Kibōtos, a Nile boat, named from such a mummy coffin."[3]

He then goes on remark, that, "In the beginning of the previous century—the seventeenth—a ship had been

[1] Hebrew, Tabah. Old Egyptian, Teb, Tebh, Tep.

[2] Kibōtos.

[3] *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* (1781), vol. xviii. p. 22

built with a rounded hull, after the proportions given in the sixth of Genesis, and it had been found, to the astonishment of all, that these proportions, given in the oldest book in the world, were precisely the most advantageous for safety, for stowage, and even for swiftness!" "George Horn," he continues, "Professor of History at Leyden in the last century, in his 'Compendium of Universal History,' gives the name of a person who had seen this ship, which was called *Noah's Ark*. At the time of the truce between the Spaniards and the Dutch, in 1609, there lived at Hoorn, in North Holland, a Mennonist, Peter Jansen, who took the notion that he would build a ship of the same proportions as Noah's ark, only smaller; that is, 120 feet long, 20 feet broad, and 12 high. While it was building every one laughed at him; but, Dutchman-like, he kept sturdily on, and found, in the end, that it justified his expectations. For when launched, it proved to be able to bear a third more freight than other ships of the same measurement, required no more hands to manage it than they, and sailed far faster. The result was that the Dutch built many others like it, calling them Noah's Arks, and they only ceased to be used after the close of the truce, in 1621, because they could not carry cannon, and thus were not safe against privateers or pirates." [1]

The ark is said, in Genesis,[2] to have rested on the *mountains* of Ararat; not on a mountain *called* Ararat, as we generally assume. The word, in the Assyrian inscriptions, is a name for Armenia, but there is no hint of any particular mountain bearing the name.[3] The special

[1] *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* (1781), vol. xviii. p. 28.

[2] Chap. viii. 4.

[3] Schrader, E. *Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament*, p. 10.

district meant, which, indeed, still bears the ancient name,[1] is one bounded, on the south, by a high chain of mountains on the middle course of the Araxes, a river flowing into the Caspian. In later times the name was given to the mountains themselves, and especially to their highest summit, which rises 16,254 feet above the sea, and has long been known as the Greater Mount Ararat, while another peak close by, 4,000 feet lower, is called the Lesser Ararat. This, however, is an incorrect transference of the name; arising no doubt from the translation of the Hebrew words in the Bible, by "the mountains of Ararat," instead of "the mountains of the country of Ararat." In Isaiah xxxvii. 38, the Hebrew words, "the land of Ararat,"[2] are translated, "land of Armenia," and so, in 2 Kings xix. 37.

The mountain now known as Ararat is an almost isolated volcanic cone, and has been ascended by Europeans at various times; the last who reached its summit being Professor Bryce, of Oxford, who found the upper parts often difficult to climb, from the softness of the ashy rock. There is, however, no crater. Strange to say, the mountain has considerably altered in shape since 1840; an earthquake having loosened part of it and hurled it down.[3] Its name in Armenia is Massis, not Ararat. Snow lies on the top, but it is not at all necessary to suppose that the ark rested on any but a comparatively low point of the range of which it forms apart. The Syrian tradition places the spot in Kurdistan, in the same region, though more to the south-west; but the

[1] Gesenius' *Heb. Handwörterbuch* (8th ed., 1878), p. 77.

[2] Ararat means "the plains of the Aryans" in Old Armenian. Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, vol. ii. p. 60.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 61.

texts of Isaiah and Kings already quoted are opposed to this being the locality.[1]

It is a curious fact that the oleaster, which may well have supplied the "olive leaf" of Noah's dove, grows profusely in the district of Ararat.[2]

The EXTENT of the Deluge has long been a subject of keen discussion. Until within the last generation its strict universality was hardly questioned. Thus we find even so lately as in the notes to Bagster's "Comprehensive Bible;" written, it may be, within the last thirty or forty years, that "the evidence of its universality is most incontestable. The moose deer, a native of America, has been found buried in Ireland; elephants, natives of Asia and Africa, in the midst of England; crocodiles, natives of the Nile, in the heart of Germany; and shell-fish, never known in any but the American seas; with the entire skeletons of whales; in the most inland counties of England." It needs hardly be said that the least tincture of geological knowledge explodes the whole of this string of illustrations. The date of all these remains is inconceivably more remote than that of the Flood. The Irish elk is not the American moose; and the evidence is perfect that the great quadrupeds found in the more recent formations, or in the superficial drift in England, lived as well as died where they are found, and that the climate, as well as the flora and fauna, have been changed, again and again, over all the earth. The argument of the writer of this note would seek to demonstrate the universality of the flood from all the fossil remains discovered; but these range through whole miles of rock, of many kinds, slowly deposited during successive geological ages, at the bottom of ancient

[1] Art. Ararat, in Riehm's *Bib. Handwörterbuch.*

[2] *Ibid.*

oceans or other waters. Surely it will not be maintained that a flood which left the leaf on an olive-tree, could have formed beds of rock to the thickness of mile upon mile; or have seen the creation of successive types of animal and vegetable life, from the corals of the lowest rocks, through every upward stage, to the highest. But the idea needs no refutation. It is at best a curious antiquarian reminiscence. The sketch of the age of the world, given in an earlier chapter, will show its complete untenableness.

In 1823 Professor Buckland published his "Reliquiae Diluvianae," to vindicate the Scripture narrative, by a study of the present surface of the earth. The existence of huge beds of gravel in positions to which no rivers or torrents now in existence could have borne them, and the fact that masses of rock carried far from their original site, are found strewn over and through them, were thought proofs of the passage of a flood like that of Noah over the regions where they occur. It has been shown, however, that this gravel, or drift, is of no one age, but of all ages; and that the boulders in it have evidently been transported to their present positions, not by a sudden rush of water, but by icebergs or glaciers; their surfaces being scratched exactly like those of the stones frozen into such masses of moving ice, and the rocks over which they pass. The retreat of the ice sheets that at various times covered most of Britain, and the melting of icebergs; with the consequent dropping of the boulders frozen into them—sometimes, even now, amounting to 20,000 tons in the case of a single iceberg—sufficiently and convincingly explained all the phenomena met with, and led Dr. Buckland himself to admit that his argument could not be maintained.

The theories that have at different times been proposed to explain the Mosaic deluge, on the supposition of

its being universal, form a curious chapter in the history of literature. Dr. Burnet,[1] in his "Theory of the Earth," published in 1680–1689, supposes that, before the Deluge, the surface of the earth was perfectly flat, without mountains, valleys, or seas, and that its interior was filled with water. The outer crust, he conceives, became so heated by the sun, after a time, as to be split into fissures through which the waters within, expanded by the heat, burst out with tremendous force, drowning all the race, and leaving the crust so unsupported that it fell together in dire confusion, creating on the one hand the vast hollows of the present oceans, and on the other, raising the hills and mountains of the world; the surplus waters flowing back into the hollow central abyss. By such a theory he hoped to account for the vast quantity of water required for a universal deluge; which he reckoned would be eight times as much as is contained in our present oceans and seas.

Ray,[2] a naturalist eminent in his day, adopted this theory, with the slight change of supposing the final catastrophe to have risen from a shifting of the earth's centre. Dr. Halley,[3] the astronomer, however, while also adopting it, supposed—astronomer-like—that the shock of a comet was the disturbing force. But all these theorists forgot that such agencies as they suggested would have caused an instantaneous deluge, not a gradual one like that of Genesis; nor did they explain how Noah could be

[1] Thomas Burnet, born 1635, a Cambridge M.A. Born in Yorkshire, and latterly Master of the Charter House, and Clerk of the Closet to William III.; died in 1715.

[2] John Ray or Wray. Studied at Cambridge, died in 1705. As a botanist and zoologist he ranks very high. His deluge theory was published in 1692.

[3] Edmund Halley. Born 1656, died 1742.

saved in a convulsion which literally tore the earth in pieces. Whiston,[1] in his "New Theory of the Earth," published in 1696, went, indeed, even so far, after calculating that the comet of 1680 had appeared on "the 28th Nov., B.C. 1349, as to publish a tract with the title, 'The Cause of the Deluge *Demonstrated.*'"

The Rev. William Kirby, the eminent entomologist, in his old age, astonished the world by propounding a theory still more extravagant. Not only did he believe in an abyss of waters within the earth; he held also that there was a subterranean "metropolis of animals," where the huge saurians of the oolite and lias still survive.

Two writers, Mr. Granville Penn and Mr. Fairholme, were amongst the last of the long list of worthy men who thought fit to put in print their theories of a universal deluge. They supposed that between the Creation and the Flood—a period reckoned as 1656 years—all the fossiliferous rocks, that is, a depth of six miles of various rock-systems, were deposited at the bottom of the ocean. By the Flood, they fancied, these were raised above the level of the waters and became the present dry land; the original surface, including the Garden of Eden, having been submerged.

Thoughtful men of all shades of religious opinion have, meanwhile, come to the opposite conclusion; that the Noachian Deluge was only a local one, though sufficiently extensive in its area to destroy all the then existing race of men. In support of this view many arguments have been offered, of which a few may be briefly stated.

The stupendous greatness of the miracle involved in a universal deluge, seems a strong reason to doubt the likelihood of God having resorted to a course wholly

[1] Wm. Whiston, M.A., Professor at Cambridge, Translator of Josephus. Born 1667, died 1752.

unnecessary to effect the end mainly in view—the judgment of mankind for their sins. There could certainly be no apparent reason for submerging the vast proportion of the world which was then uninhabited, or of raising the waters above the tops of mountains to which no living creature could approach. It is to be remembered, moreover, that the addition of such a vast mass of water to the weight of the earth—eight times that contained in the ocean beds—would have disarranged the whole solar system, and even the other systems of worlds through the universe; for all are interbalanced with each other in their various relations. Then, this immeasurable volume of water, after having served its brief use, must have been annihilated, to restore the harmony of the heavenly motions: the only instance in the whole economy of nature of the annihilation of even a particle of matter. Nor could any part of either the animal or vegetable worlds have survived a submersion of the planet for a year; and hence everything, except what the ark contained, must have perished; including even the fish; of which many species would die out if the water were fresh, others, if it were brackish, and others, again, if it were salt.

Men of the soundest orthodoxy have further urged that physical evidences still exist which prove that the Deluge could only have been local. Thus Professor Henslow supports De Candolle's estimate of the age of some of the baobab trees of Senegal as not less than 5,230 years, and of the taxodium of Mexico as from 4,000 to 6,000; periods which carry still living trees beyond that of the Flood. There is, moreover, in Auvergne, in France, a district covered with extinct volcanoes, marked by cones of pumice stone, ashes, and such light substances as could not have resisted the waters of the Deluge. Yet they are

evidently more ancient than the time of Noah; for since they became extinct, rivers have cut channels for themselves through beds of columnar basalt, that is, of intensely hard crystallized lava, of no less than 150 feet in thickness, and have even eaten into the granite rocks beneath. And Auvergne is not the only part where similar phenomena are seen. They are found in the Eifel country of the Prussian Rhine province; in New Zealand, and elsewhere.

Nor is the peculiarity of some regions in their zoological characteristics less convincing. Thus, the fauna of Australia is entirely exceptional; as, for example, in the strange fact that quadrupeds of all kinds are marsupial, that is, provided with a pouch in which to carry their young. The fossil remains of this great island continent show, moreover, that existing species are the direct descendants of similar races, of extreme antiquity, and that the surface of Australia is the oldest land, of any considerable extent, yet discovered on the globe—dating back at least to the Tertiary geological age; since which it has not been disturbed to any great extent. But this carries us to a period immensely more remote than Noah.

Nor is it possible to conceive of an assemblage of all the living creatures of the different regions of the earth at any one spot. The unique fauna of Australia—survivors of a former geological age—certainly could neither have reached the ark nor regained their home after leaving it; for they are separated from the nearest continuous land by vast breadths of ocean. The Polar bear surely could not survive a journey from his native icebergs to the sultry plains of Mesopotamia; nor could the animals of South America have reached these except by travelling the whole length, northwards, of North America, and then, after miraculously crossing Behring's Straits, having pressed, westwards, across the whole breadth of Asia, a

continent larger than the moon. That even a deer should accomplish such a pedestrian feat is inconceivable, but how could a sloth have done it—a creature which lives in trees, never, if possible, descending to the ground, and able to advance on it only by the slowest and most painful motions? Or, how could tropical creatures find supplies of food in passing through such a variety of climates, and over vast spaces of hideous desert?

Still more—how could any vessel, however large, have held pairs and sevens of all the creatures on earth, with food for a year, and how could the whole family of Noah have attended to them? There are at least two thousand mammals; more than seven thousand kinds of birds; from the gigantic ostrich to the humming bird; and over fifteen hundred kinds of amphibious animals and reptiles;[1] not to speak of 120,000[2] kinds of insects, and an unknown multitude of varieties of infusoria. Nor does this include the many thousand kinds of mollusca, radiata, and fish. Even if the ark, as has been supposed by one writer, was of 80,000 tons burden,[3] such a freightage needs only be mentioned to make it be felt impossible.

Look which way we like, gigantic difficulties meet us. Thus, Hugh Miller[4] has noticed that it would have required a continuous miracle to keep alive the fish for whom the deluge water was unsuitable, while even spawn would perish if kept unhatched for a whole year, as that of many fish must have been. Nor would the vegetable world have fared better than the animal, for of the 100,000 known species of plants, very few would survive a year's submersion.

[1] Schödler's *Buch der Natur*, vol. ii. p. 375.
[2] Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, art. Insecten.
[3] Note to Bagster's *Comprehensive Bible*, 4to.
[4] *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 337.

That a terrible catastrophe like that of the Flood—apart from the all-sufficient statements of Scripture—is not outside geological probability, is abundantly illustrated by recorded facts. The subsidence and upheaval of large extents of country has already been noticed. Nor can we justly measure the quiet of the present, though it is only comparative, with the violence of periods in the past. The vast chains of the Himalayah, the Caucasus, the Jura mountains and the Alps, for example, were all upheaved in the Pliocene period, which is one of the most recent in geology.[1] A subsidence or elevation of a district, as the case might be, would cause a tremendous flood over vast regions.[2] Nor are such movements of the earth's surface on a great scale unknown even now. Darwin repeatedly instances cases of recent elevation and depression of the earth's surface. On one part of the Island of St. Maria, in Chili, he found beds of putrid mussel shells still adhering to the rocks, ten feet above high-water mark, where the inhabitants had formerly dived at low-water spring tides for these shells.[3] Similar shells were met with by him at Valparaiso at the height of 1,300 feet.[4] And at another place a great bed of now-existing shells had been raised 350 feet above the level of the sea.[5]

"I have convincing proofs," says he, "that this part of the continent of South America—Northern Chili—has been elevated, near the coast, at least from 400 to 500, and in some parts from 1,000 to 1,300 feet since the epoch of existing shells; and further inland the rise possibly

[1] Heer, *The Primeval World of Switzerland*, vol. ii. p. 284.
[2] *See* pp. 144, 145.
[3] Darwin's *Naturalist's Voyage*, p. 310.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 310, 254.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 297.

may have been greater."[1] Wallace shows that a vast portion of the South of Asia—from the east coast of Cochin China, to the west coast of Sumatra, and thence round the outside of Borneo, itself nearly twice as large as Great Britain and Ireland together—has sunk beneath the ocean since the creation of the present forms of vegetation and animal life. This vast area embraces 27 degrees from north to south, and 21 from east to west; including a region of over 2,000,000 square miles. In all parts of this the sea is still so shallow—never exceeding 50 fathoms in depth—that ships can anchor in any part of it.[2] Elevations also are as marked as this amazing subsidence. "In many places," says he, "I have observed the unaltered surfaces of the elevated reefs, with great masses of coral standing up in their natural position, and hundreds of shells so fresh-looking that it was hard to believe that they had been more than a few years out of the water; and, in fact, it is very probable that such changes have occurred within a few centuries."[3] No difficulty on geological grounds can therefore be urged against such a catastrophe having happened, in the early ages of our race, as would have swept the whole seat of human habitation with a deluge in whose waters all mankind must have perished.

The great cause, without question, of the belief that the Flood was universal, has been the idea that the words of Scripture taught this respecting that awful visitation. But it by no means does so. The word translated "earth" in our English version has not only the meaning of the world as a whole, but others much more limited.

[1] Darwin's *Naturalist's Voyage*, p. 358.
[2] Wallace's *The Malay Archipelago*, vol. i. p. 14.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 10.

Thus it often stands for Palestine alone,[1] and even for the small district round a town,[2] or for a field or plot of land.[3] Besides, we must not forget that such words are always to be understood according to the meaning attached to them by the age or people among whom they are used. But what ideas the ancient Hebrews had of the world has been already shown, and the limited sense in which they used the most general phrases—just as we ourselves often do when we wish to create a vivid impression of wide extent or great number—is seen from the usage of their descendants, in the New Testament. When St. Luke speaks of Jews dwelling at Jerusalem out of "every nation under heaven,"[4] it would surely be wrong to press this to a literal exactness. When St. Paul says that the faith of the obscure converts at Rome was spoken of "throughout the whole world,"[5] he could not have meant the whole round orb, but only the Roman empire. And would any one think of taking in the modern geographical sense his declaration that already, when he was writing to the Colossians, the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven?[6]

A striking passage in "The Testimony of the Rocks," may fittingly close this subject. "There is a remarkable portion of the globe," says Hugh Miller, "chiefly on the Asiatic continent, though it extends into Europe, and which is nearly equal to all Europe in area—whose rivers, the Volga, the Oural, and others, do not fall into the ocean or into any of the many seas which communicate with it. They are, on the contrary, turned inwards, if I may so express myself; losing themselves in the

[1] Joel i. 2. Ps. xxxvii. 9, 11, 22, 29; xliv. 3. Prov. ii. 21; x. 30.
[2] Josh. viii. 1.
[3] Gen. xxiii. 15. Exod. xxiii. 10.
[4] Acts ii. 5. [5] Rom. i. 8. [6] Col. i. 23.

eastern parts of the tract, in the lakes of a rainless district, in which they only supply the waste of evaporation; and falling, in the western parts, into seas such as the Caspian and the Aral. In this region there are extensive districts still under the level of the ocean. The shore line of the Caspian, for example, is rather more than 83 feet beneath that of the Black Sea; and some of the great flat steppes which spread out around it have a mean level of about 30 feet below that of the Baltic. Were a trench-like strip of country communicating between the Caspian and the Gulf of Finland to be depressed beneath the level of the latter sea, it would so open the fountains of the great deep as to lay under water an extensive and populous region, containing the cities of Astrachan and Astrabad, and many other towns and villages. Nor is it unworthy of remark that part of this peculiar region forms no inconsiderable portion of the great recognised centre of the human family."[1] Read in connection with what is said elsewhere[2] of the movements of the earth's surface over the Baltic region even at this day, this passage is very striking.

[1] *Testimony of the Rocks*, p. 345.
[2] *See* pp. 144, 145.

CHAPTER XV.

AFTER THE FLOOD.

TRUE to the simplicity of the early ages of mankind, the relations of men to the Almighty are presented in Scripture in language suited to such a state of society. Abstract ideas are formed only at a late period in the development of a race: like children, they must long be addressed through the senses rather than by the intellect alone. Hence, instead of speaking of God in lofty and mysterious terms; then quite unintelligible, and hardly less so now; Scripture habitually ascribes to Him the actions, emotions, and language which men themselves would have used in similar circumstances. Adam and Eve,[1] we are told, heard the voice of God as He was walking in the garden in the cool of the day[2]—that is, when the fresh breeze of evening has succeeded the sultry heat of noon. He is described as speaking the creative words; as pronouncing the curse in human language; as holding judgment on Cain in direct arraignment and condemnation; as repenting that He had

[1] The name of Eve was perpetuated among the Assyrians, in that of their goddess Ava="life." The Hebrew word is Havah. The name Adam was in the same way perpetuated in Assyrian in the form Admu, dadmu or dadmi=dust. *See* p. 83.

[2] This is the full translation.

made man on the earth, and as grieved at His heart as directing Noah in the details of the plan of the ark, and as making a covenant with Him, in human speech, after the Deluge.

It is not, however, to be thought from such modes of expression, that human characteristics are intended to be ascribed to the Creator. In any age it is necessary to describe the unknown by the help of the known, and as the mysterious Personality of God must ever be incomprehensible to man, there is no way in which we can represent His relations to us, except by using words borrowed from our own faculties, emotions, and modes of action. Language, in any case, is at first a series of images appealing to the senses, and it only slowly passes into an abstract term in which the idea is directly embodied. The simple word "man," meant, at first, "the thinking being";[1] "woman" was originally "wife-man," and our word "God," though so like "good," seems to have come, rather, from the Sanscrit word, "gudha," "the self-concealing invisible One."[2] The word "angel" means simply "a messenger;" and though spirits "have neither flesh nor bones as we have," it is impossible to speak of them except under the imaginative form of a perfect human shape, and human attributes. So also with God. Knowing no being higher than ourselves, we must speak of Him by images drawn from our own nature, or leave Him a cold and inconceivable abstraction, like the Hindoo Brahma.

The exquisite naturalness with which this inevitable accommodation to our necessities is carried out in it, marks the extreme antiquity of the Bible. The world was still young when the Old Testament was written, especially its earliest parts; and the sacred writers only

[1] *See* p. 89. [2] Müller's *Etymol. Sprach-Wörterbuch.*

speak as we should expect them, when they use a child-like simplicity. But the whole Bible, alike, impresses on us the remembrance that human attributes ascribed to God are only figures of speech; for even Moses expressly forbids any representations of Him. Heathen nations might personify their divinities in images and paintings: no more was permitted to Israel than to use the imagery of words which our mental constitution absolutely demands.

Little is told us of Noah's life after his wonderful preservation. Descending with his family from the ark,[1] he built the first altar of which there is any mention, and offered on it, as was fitting, a burnt-offering "of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl." It may be in remembrance of this earliest consecration of the mountain tops to grateful worship, that "high places" have been so universal among all races, in all ages, and that cairns and cromlechs were built on heights from the remotest times. Paradise had vanished with the Flood, and God Himself, as it were, removed from earth to heaven; though still present to save those who duly honoured Him. What spot could be more appropriate for recommencing the homage of the race to Him, than one raised above the common earth; one marked, moreover, by so signal an event as the deliverance of the remnant of mankind?

When the division of animals into clean and unclean

[1] The "gopher wood" (Gen. vi. 14) of which the ark was built, is mentioned only in this one place. It seems to have been the "Copher," or cypress tree, which grows more abundantly in Chaldea and Armenia than in any other country. Gesenius defines it, "a pitch and resin producing tree, as the pine, cedar, fir or cypress." *Thesaurus*, 300. The Sept. wrongly translates it "squared beams."

was made we are not informed, but it is worthy of notice that Noah does not confine himself in his offering to those regarded as clean under the law of Moses.[1] The greatness of the occasion, however, demanded a sacrifice in keeping with it, and Noah, moreover, had provided for this in the number of clean creatures admitted into the ark. Nor is there any mention of offering parts of the victims only, as was appointed by Moses:[2] the whole seems to have been laid on the altar, as a form of sacrifice peculiar to the patriarchal age.

A brief phrase, which henceforth became the standing form for the Divine satisfaction with a sacrifice, expresses the reconciliation which followed between earth and heaven. God "smelled a sweet savour,"[3] and graciously gave a promise that man should never again be destroyed by a Deluge. Henceforth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, should never cease. The Hebrews marked their year by the rainy winter time, with its cold, and its preparation of the soil and sowing—and the dry summer, with its heat, and its harvest.[4] As yet, like the Hindoos still, the hoary fathers of the world had six seasons.

God had given His blessing to man when first created, and now repeated it when our race was beginning anew. Nature, in all its tribes, was formally subjected to mankind. Our first parents had received a gift of all that grows as their food, but henceforth every "moving thing that lives"—not, therefore, the Levitically clean alone, was to be our "meat." But with this there were limitations. The warm blood of men and humbler creatures seemed, in the early ages of the world, to contain the very

[1] Lev. i. 2, 10, 14. [2] Lev. i. [3] Lev. i. 9.
[4] Exod. xxxiv. 21. Ps. lxxiv. 17. Prov. xx. 4. Isa. xviii. 4, 6. Jer. viii. 20; xxxvi. 22. Amos iii. 15. Zech. xiv. 8.

life, and to be almost identical with the soul, and hence it was especially sacred, in proportion as the life and spirit were held in reverence. The sight of what was believed to be the soul itself, carried the mind instantly to thoughts of God, called up in it mysterious fears, and filled it with the unspeakable awe which overpowers us when the veil between us and the Divine is for the moment rent. Hence, blood could scarcely be touched, far less eaten, by piously-minded men in the early ages, and in this spirit God forbade its use, with the utmost strictness, to Noah, and afterwards to Israel. As the seat of life and indivisible from it—of that life which belongs to God, it was to be shunned. Even that of creatures slain for food must be covered with earth and hidden out of sight. Life must be honoured as divine and sacred: a rule of unspeakable worth in the violence of rude ages. A further sanctity was thrown over the precept in after times, by Moses, in the command that the blood of all sacrifices should be poured out on the altar, as an "atonement for the soul"[1] of the offerer. On this prohibition and the others that follow, the Rabbis founded the requirements demanded from heathen half-proselytes; to shun idolatry, blasphemy, murder, the eating of blood and things strangled, fornication and incest, robbery and theft, and disobedience to authority.[2] Nor is it without interest to note that this rabbinical law was so generally accepted in the days of our Lord that it was adopted by the Apostolic Church as the rule for Gentile converts to Christianity.[3]

A second prohibition throws further light on patriarchal morals and social polity. While the animals could be killed at man's will, human blood was not to be shed,

[1] Lev. xvii. 11. [2] Dillmann, in *Bibel Lex.*, vol. iv. p. 341.
[3] Acts xv. 20–29.

either by man or beast, without a penalty. God had already proclaimed the sanctity of human life by the sign given to Cain, to preserve him,[1] and by the prohibition of the use of blood as food; but this additional law now made it specially sacred and inviolable. For the life that is taken, He declares He will demand that of the beast or of the man who has taken it. Life is to be paid for life. Society is possible only when the person is safe, and hence in this fundamental law, the corner stone of human progress and social life was firmly laid at the very hour of the new birth of the world.

This first covenant between God and man was confirmed by a sign worthy of a transaction so unique. The rainbow had glittered on the clouds for immeasurable ages before man's creation, but it was now to be adopted as a Divine pledge of goodwill to our race. Other covenants would be made with Abraham and with Moses, but they were sealed only by a personal or passing pledge; this, had a perennial sign in heaven vouchsafed it. The simplicity of the language used is only equalled by its beauty. "When I bring a cloud over the earth," and cause it to rain, "the bow shall be on the cloud, and I will look on it; that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature," and stay the rain, "that it become no more a flood like that which has just ended." The sacredness of the rainbow has passed, from this consecration, into the religions and poetry of all nations. Homer tells us that Jupiter set it in the clouds for a sign.[2] In the so-called Field of the Magi, in Persia, there may still be seen a picture cut into a rock, showing a winged boy sitting on a rainbow, and an old man before it in the attitude of prayer.[3] The

[1] Gen. iv. 15.

[2] *Iliad*, xi. 47; xvii. 547.

[3] Rosenmüller, *Das Alte und Neue Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 43.

Greeks fabled Iris, who brought messages from God to man, as the rainbow. The old Scandinavians, and perhaps the Germans, fancied it a bridge built by God to link heaven and earth. But in Genesis the symbol is grandly monotheistic and spiritual. The rainbow is the pledge of friendship between God and man, the token of Divine grace and pity, the assurance of preserving care. Appearing only when the sun has finally broken through the clouds, it is, moreover, a special sign that the watery destruction which the clouds held in their bosom is already turned aside.

The only additional mention we have of Noah is apparently given to introduce the historical notice of his descendants. Having betaken himself after the Flood to the growth of the vine,[1] it became, we are told, the occasion of revealing in his son Ham a trait in which the patriarch read the unworthy future of the offender's posterity. In the want of modest shame, and the hint of impurity and sensualism in family life, thus disclosed, Noah's prophetic glance saw the characteristics of Ham's son, Canaan, and his descendants, and foretold the debasement that would surely follow: "He would be cursed, and would be a servant of servants to his brethren." But this implied the continued guilt of his race, for the curse of God falls only on those that hate Him.[2] The reverent modesty of Shem and Japheth, in the same way, foreshadowed the better future before their children. The moral and intellectual peculiarities of a race are, perhaps, only the perpetuation of those of their first ancestors: the moral features stamped as abidingly as the physical or intellectual. Permanence of type is recognised in the

[1] This was probably in Armenia, the native country of the plant. Tristram's *Nat. Hist.*, p. 403.

[2] Exod. xx. 5.

lower creatures, and it is natural that it should be a law among mankind. To Shem and Japheth, therefore, their father's visions of the future revealed a far different picture from that prepared for the descendants of Ham. From Shem were to spring Israel and the races most closely connected with the earthly kingdom of God; from Ham, among others, the Canaanitish nations, contrasted most strongly to the Chosen People in history, religion and morals; but the descendants of Japheth, rough, indeed, like the northern regions they were to choose, yet uncorrupted and vigorous, were to press even into the bounds of the Semitic stock. History verifies the complete fulfilment of the patriarchal prediction. The glory of Shem, as the fountain head of the religion of mankind, needs no illustration; and the race of Canaan sank before the descendants of Japheth, in even their earliest settlements in the islands of the Levant, and on the coasts of Asia and of other lands.[1]

A point so interesting demands attention to the precise words employed. The future of the race of Shem is illustrated, in the patriarch's mind, by their happiness in knowing the true God. He is the God of Shem, and as such, will, Himself, be their exceeding great reward. As to Japheth, as he and Shem had acted together, like true sons, their history would also in a measure blend. "God give wide bounds to Japheth,"[2] says the seer. "He shall dwell in the tents of Shem"—that is, he shall have part in Shem's blessing; for the God of Shem will

[1] Knobel's *Die Genesis* (1875), p. 172.

[2] Nöldeke, in *Bibel Lex.*, art. Japheth, explains this—"God gives him prosperity, that is, wide bounds, in contrast to contracted, which imply the opposite of prosperity." The pronoun "He," in what follows, Nöldeke understands of God. "Yet, the greatest blessing will remain with Shem, for God will dwell in his tents."

also be *his* God. How the nations sprung from Japheth stretched from Judea to the Atlantic; how they now reach across it to the New World, and have founded empires in the wide Southern Ocean; how, moreover, the religion of Shem has been their heritage also, is part of history.

The Table of Nations descended from Noah, given in the tenth chapter of Genesis, is the fitting sequel to the story of the great patriarch. At first sight it seems only a dry catalogue, but, on closer examination, it presents a view of the populations of early antiquity, than which nothing could be more interesting, or more instructive.

The use of the word "sons" in this table of peoples, is in accordance with the universal practice in the East, of speaking of tribes or nations as "the sons" of some recognised ancestor. Thus, in the Bible we have the "sons of Israel" for the Hebrews; the "sons of Judah" for the tribe of that name; the "sons of Ammon" for Ammonites; the "sons of Ishmael" for the Arabs. That nations rather than individuals are indicated by the names in the table is seen from many of them being in the plural—as Rodanim, the Rhodians; Kittim, the inhabitants of Cyprus; while "Mizraim," the name for Egypt throughout Scripture, is in the dual, in recognition of the Upper and Lower Kingdoms into which the valley of the Nile was always divided, as shown by the two crowns of the kings sculptured on the monuments, and by the hieroglyph for Egypt—a double water-plant, or a double clod of land.[1] Many of the names, besides, are used throughout Scripture as those of nations.[2] Asshur is usually translated by "Assyria," Elam by "Persia," Madai

[1] Rawlinson's *Origin of Nations*, p. 167.

[2] 1 Kings xxii. 48, etc. Ezek. xxvii. 7–15; xxxviii. 2–6.

by the "Medes," or "Media"; Cush by "Ethiopia," Lud by "Lydia," and Aram by "Syria."

The descent of all mankind from Noah is, of course, a renewed testimony by Scripture to the unity of the human race—a doctrine so intimately connected with the Divine plan of Redemption, and so vital to the brotherhood and mutual sympathy of man with man.

The distribution of the various nations and tribes to the respective sons of Noah, has been thought by some to be based on the three great distinctions of colour—Shem being assumed to stand for the red or brown races, Ham for the dark or black, and Japheth for the fair or white.[1] Others, however, regard the list as drawn up in reference to the geographical position of the different nations or tribes.[2] But it is certain, that mere geographical relations do not explain all the characteristics of the list; for while the classification by distinct origin may not in every instance be capable of proof, it is indisputable in the case of many.

Beginning with the descendants of Japheth, the table opens with the name of GOMER, the Cimmerians of antiquity, the Cimbri of Roman times, and the Cymry or Celts of still existing communities. Their original seat, in the farthest north known to the Hebrews or Greeks, is alluded to in the Odyssey.[3]

> The shores of deep Oceanus;
> Of the Cimmerian men the race and town

[1] Knobel (*Völkertafel*, p. 22) derives Japheth from Yaphah, "to be beautiful" and, hence, "white"—that colour being thought the ideal of beauty. Ham means "hot," and thus refers to the countries where men are darkest. Jewish expositors, says Knobel, understand Shem to include the races of intermediate shades. Shem means "a name," "renown."

[2] So Merx and Nöldeke.

[3] xi. 14–19. Mordaunt Barnard's translation.

Were there, in mist and cloud enwrapped; the sun
Never looks down upon them with its rays;
Nor when it marches up the starry skies,
Nor when from heaven it turns again to earth;
But over wretched men sad night is spread.

This dismal description refers to the country north of the Black Sea, to the Crimea, and the shores of the Sea of Azoff. The Black Sea, indeed, bore the name of The Cimmerian in antiquity, and other parts in these regions equally mark the local predominance of the Cymric race. The name Crimea itself is, in fact, a corruption from theirs. Warlike and fierce from the remotest ages, ancient history often records their inroads on more civilized regions; as in Ezekiel,[1] where they are predicted as coming on a war of desolation from the extreme north, in alliance with other nations. The invasions of Asia Minor, by a part of them, driven from their homes by the Scythians, were a standing alarm for seven centuries before Christ. But the larger and braver half clung to the remote regions they had always held, amidst the shades of woods which stretched, unbroken, to the Hercynian Forest in Germany. Latterly, the peninsula of Jutland became their chief seat, and was known by their name; but they spread to France, Spain and Britain, and still show their splendid vitality in the Celtic populations of Western Europe, including our own islands. The Welsh, indeed, call themselves Cymry, and Cumberland still perpetuates the remembrance of their having long held it against the English tribes from Germany.[2]

Three races are named as the "sons" of Gomer,—Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah,—which are not easily

[1] xxxviii. 2–6.

[2] "Gomer" by Kneucker, in *Bibel Lex.* Knobel's *Völkertafel*, pp. 22–32. Rawlinson's *Origin of Nations.* Bunsen's *Bibel Urkunden*, vol i. p. 64. Vaihinger, in Herzog's *Encyc.*, art. Gomer.

identified. Ashkenaz, however, seems to mean "the horse-milkers," and, if so, may point to a race of nomades like the modern Tartars, or the ancient Scythians; roaming the steppes of upper western Asia, in the neighbourhood of the Cimmerians, and allied to them in blood. It may be that we have traces of it in the river *Ascanius* in Asia Minor, and in the names *Scandia* and *Scandinavia*, but this is doubtful. Riphath has some resemblance to the name of the fabled Rhiphæan mountains, in whose caves the north wind was born, and which the Greeks placed to the north of the known world. But there is greater probability that the conjecture is right which connects them with the mountain chain Riphates, a snowy range in Armenia, beyond the Tigris. Togarmah is mentioned by Ezekiel,[1] as a people trading in horses and mules at the fairs of Tyre, and as allied with Gomer, or the Cimbri, in an approaching invasion of Palestine. In this connection it is noteworthy that the Armenians, the Georgians, and the races of the Caucasus, still trace their descent, through one Torgona, from Gomer, and still call themselves "The House of Torgona," or as we have it, Togarmah. These races are all Indo-Germanic, or Aryan.

Magog, second of the "sons" of Japheth, occurs elsewhere in Scripture as the name of a country, in connection with Gog, the prince of tribes known as Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal;[2] the two latter named in Genesis as the fifth and sixth "sons" of Japheth. Hence, it would almost seem as if Magog had been a vague term among the Hebrews for the barbarous races of northern Asia; like the name "Scythians" among the Greeks.

[1] xxvii. 14; xxxviii. 6.

[2] Ezek. xxxviii. 2; xxxix. 1. The word translated "chief," is really a proper name, Rosh.

Jerome, indeed, gives it as the opinion of the Jews of his day, that it meant the "terrible and countless Scythian nations," and while Knobel further identifies it with the Slavs of to-day, Gesenius and others understand by ROSH, the modern Russians. Ezekiel describes the four as, alike, a wild and terrible race of mounted men[1] armed with the bow; a description which suits the Scythians who invaded Palestine in B.C. 625. But the name was also applied to other peoples, for TUBAL and MESHECH appear not only as barbarian warriors, riding on steppe horses; but, in some branches of their stock, at least, as a trading people, who brought vessels of iron and copper to Tyre for sale.[2] Tubal, in fact, is simply the Persian word for brass or copper,[3] and Meshech is thought by some to be the neighbouring people, the Chalybes, who were especially known in antiquity for their copper mining.[4] It seems to support this explanation, that Herodotus mentions the Tibarenes and the Moschi together, as nations living south-east of the Black Sea, and says that they worked copper mines, and were included in the nineteenth satrapy of the kingdom of Darius.[5] The Assyrian inscriptions, moreover, speak of a people and land of Muski, in North Assyria, which there is hardly room to doubt is the Meshech of Scripture.[6]

The MADAI, who come next in order in the list, bear the very name by which the Medes are known on the Assyrian monuments, and in the great inscription of

[1] xxxviii. 15; xxxix. 3.
[2] Ezek. xxvii. 13.
[3] Hitzig, On Ezek. xxvii.
[4] Xen. *Anab.*, v. 5, 1.
[5] *Herod.*, iii. 94; vii. 78.
[6] Schrader's *Die Keilinschriften und das A. T.*, pp. 12, 13.

Darius. JAVAN, the next, is the land of the Greeks, or Ionians, in a wide sense, which it is curious to notice is also repeated in the Assyrian tablets, with hardly any change, as Javanu; a term also used by Darius the Mede.[1] TIRAS, the seventh "son" of Japheth, is not so easy to identify. It has been thought by many, both in ancient and modern times, to refer to the inhabitants of Thrace, which anciently embraced the whole country lying north of the Sea of Marmora, and of the Ægean Archipelago. The latest explanation, however, seems the best. It supposes the name to apply to the Tursenoi, Tursci, or Tusci, a branch of the Etruscan race, in their earlier northern settlements, before they advanced into Italy. They were known in remote antiquity as sea-farers and sea robbers, not only in the Italian seas, but also, as Tyrsenian Pelasgi, in the Greek Archipelago. It is curious to find that this people invaded Egypt, in alliance with the Achæans, the Lydians, the Sicilians, the Sardinians and other tribes, so long ago as the fourteenth century before Christ.[2]

This exhausts the seven "sons" or immediate descendants of Japheth, but a further list of nations or tribes which sprang from Javan, or the Greeks, is added,[3] as in the case of Gomer. Of ELISHAH, the first of these, Ezekiel speaks as inhabiting a coast land of the Mediterranean, from which the famous purple dye was brought to Tyre. The fact that the sea-snail which yielded this was found not only on the coasts of Laconia, but in the Gulf of Corinth, and at various islands of the Grecian Archipelago—when coupled with the name of the district of Elis, in the Peloponnesus, seems to indicate that as

[1] Schrader's *Die Keilinschriften und das A. T.*, p. 13.
[2] Chabas, *Études de l'antiquité historique.* Paris, 1873.
[3] Ezek. xxvii. 7.

the land intended. Elishah is, however, translated in the Syriac Bible, a "province in Italy," and its being mentioned in connection with Tarshish, and with Kittim, which sometimes stands for all the Greek territory, has led some to think it more probable that in the list in Genesis it is the name of Sicily.

Tarshish, which comes next, is doubtless the famous Phenician port in Spain, outside the Straits of Gibraltar, between the two mouths of the Guadalquiver,[1] or "great river." The name Tarshish, however, strikingly corroborates the statement in the Table of the settlement having been first made by a race of Aryan, or Japhetic extraction, for it has been found to be only a form of the Sanscrit or Aryan word, Tarîscha—"the sea," or the "sea coast," and this meaning is affirmed by an old tradition of the Rabbins to have been for ages applied to it. Thus, before the Phenicians settled in the region, another race had given it a name which these adopted, and which was afterwards applied to the whole district. In Knobel's opinion the original colonists were an offshoot of the Etruscans, before they had finally made Italy their chief seat.[2]

It is curious to look back through long ages at these ancient movements of men, and notice the attractions which drew them to particular spots. Thus Tarshish was famous from the earliest antiquity for the abundance of silver and other metals yielded by its mines; and no less for its corn. Already in the time of Solomon,[3] a

[1] Guadalquiver is the name given to the river by the Arabs while they were in Spain. They had no word for a river in our sense and called it "G'dol-keber," "the great wady," or watercourse. Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 16. In Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, however, it is derived from Wad-al-Kebir = the great river.

[2] *Völkertafel*, p. 86.

[3] B.C. 1015–975.

thousand years before Christ, the huge vessels which sailed to it were known as Tarshish ships, as in later days we spoke of "Indiamen," and the name even came to be applied to any very large merchantmen, to whatever port they sailed.[1] From the busy wharves of Tarshish, huge cargoes were borne away, of iron, tin, silver, lead, and other commodities, including, at least in later times, consignments of delicate lampreys, and heavy freights of wheat; for which, doubtless, Tarshish received a proportionate importation of the productions of the East. The world was as busy then as now; the fisher with his net, the miner with his pick, the sailor with his vessel, the smith with his hammer, the jeweller with his art, and countless others, each in his way.

By KITTIM or CHITTIM, the next in the list of the "sons" of Javan, that is of the offshoots of the Greek stem, a people is indicated whose country is described as an island or coast land. The "islands of Chittim" are, indeed, frequently mentioned in Scripture.[2] It was at them that the Syrian homeward bound fleet heard of the fall of their great city, and it was thither that the Tyrians fled for refuge.[3] Josephus,[4] in the generation after Christ, had already identified the name with that of Cyprus, and gives, as a proof, that of a Cyprian town—Kittion or Citium, adding that the same name was then used, in a wider sense, of other islands, and of "the greater part of the coast lands" of the

[1] Thus the ships navigating the Red Sea, and trading to Ophir (South Arabia), are called "Tarshish ships." Isa. xxiii. 1, 14. 1 Kings ix. 28; x. 22; xx. 49. 2 Chron. ix. 21; xx. 36, 37. Luther calls these vessels "Sea-ships," using the name Tarshish in its Sanscrit sense of "the sea," which is adopted also by the Vulgate, the Septuagint, and the Syriac.

[2] Jer. ii. 10. [3] Isa. xxiii. 1–12. [4] *Ant.* i. 6, 1.

Mediterranean. "It is especially used," adds another ancient, who himself lived in Cyprus,[1] "of the Cyprians and Rhodians, and also of the Macedonians, because these were of the Cyprian or Rhodian stock."

The last name in this part of the Table in the Hebrew Bible has been changed, by the substitution of one letter for another very like it, to Dodanim, instead of RODANIM; —the correct form in the Greek Old Testament and other ancient versions. It stands, without doubt, for the Greek inhabitants of the Island of Rhodes, which was reckoned one of the isles of the Chittim, with whom the Rhodians were counted; and next after whom, therefore, they are appropriately introduced.

This closes the descendants of Japheth, who are thus distributed, in their earliest history, over the regions known to the Hebrews in the extreme north; from Central Asia and Armenia, to the wild forest regions north of the Black Sea and the Egean, and also to Greece; while their descendants are represented as spreading to Sicily, to Spain, and to the large islands of the Eastern Mediterranean. The exact correspondence of this with the latest results of ethnological science is very striking.

The "sons" of Ham follow those of Japheth; the word Ham itself meaning in Hebrew, warm, or hot, and hence the South. It is also an Egyptian word, and was the common name among the Nile population for their country, from the "black" or dark colour of the soil.[2] Ham is represented as the father of the southern or dark and black races, in contrast to Japheth, from whom the

Epiphanius, died A.D. 403. *Hær.*, xxx. 25.

[2] The words alchemy and chemistry preserve, in our own language, this meaning of Ham or Cham. They literally mean "the black art" from Kemia—Chem—black. They came to us through the Arabs, from Egypt.

northern nations sprang, while those between are traced to Shem.

Four great races or "sons" are assigned to this division of mankind,—"Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan." Of these, CUSH was the old Egyptian name for the region between the cataracts of the Nile and Abyssinia, and for the peoples, other than negroes, south of Egypt. It is thus nearly identical with the present Nubia, and with the earlier use of the name Ethiopia by the Greeks. The dark tribes on both sides of the Arabian Gulf were, however, known as Ethiopians, and Herodotus even speaks of an Asiatic branch of the race. Indeed, in Homer, this name is applied to all the races and lands of the then known southern parts of the world; and, in the same way, Cush was a general term among the ancient Hebrews for the same countries and races:[1] for the peoples named in the Table as sprung from Cush include dwellers in Southern Asia as well as in Africa.[2] But these continents, it must not be forgotten, were not as yet sharply discriminated, in the earliest times; for even Herodotus reckons Egypt as in Asia, though he feels the difficulty of such a division. Even as late as about Christ's day, geographers spoke of the "Cussites" of the territory of Susiana, beyond the Tigris and Euphrates. Nimrod, moreover, a "son" of Cush, is handed down to us as the first king of Babel and the district round it. It may be, also, that the Mesopotamian king, Cushan Rishathaim, of the time of the Judges, marks the survival of a Cushite kingdom[3] in that region, to a comparatively modern date. There is still, moreover, a province of Persia, on the mouth of the Euphrates, bearing the significant name of Khuzistan.

In a narrower sense, Cush is used in the Bible, much

[1] Gen. ii. 13. [2] Gen. x. 7. [3] Judges iii. 8.

as it was by the ancient Egyptians, for the region south of the cataracts of the Nile,[1] including Kordofan, along with Abyssinia, the present Nubia, and part of Sennaar. This great stretch of country was, anciently, far less confused in its ethnography than it is to-day; for countless changes have produced a variety of mixed races, of mingled Cushite, Semitic, and negro origin. There are, however, no traces of this in early antiquity, for there is no mention, in the Old Testament, of Semitic races in these regions; though Herodotus, in the fifth century before Christ, speaks of Arabs, along with African Ethiopians, in the army of Xerxes.[2] Nor is there any hint of the presence of the negro race; for even the Egyptian monuments show a marked distinction between the Ethiopians, and the negroes on the west of their country. Like all the peoples already mentioned in the Table of Nations, the Cushites belonged to the Caucasian race. It is true that the Ethiopic language, in use through later ages, is essentially Semitic; but this may be explained from the Ethiopian races having mingled with Semitic ones in Arabia,[3] and adopted their language; as the Normans adopted the French, or as Latin became the language of many countries under the Romans. Indeed, there are still tribes undoubtedly representing the old Cushites, whose language is equally distinct from the Semitic of Abyssinia on the one hand, and from the negro languages on the other, and whose physical characteristics clearly distinguish them from both. The typical African generally, in fact, is very different from the negro, whose peculiarities were apparently first due to local influences and social degeneracy.[4] Mere colour is no index of race, for the Jew is of every complexion accord-

[1] Ezek. xxix. 10.
[2] *Herod.*, vii. 69.
[3] Knobel, *Völkertafel*, p. 257.
[4] *See* p. 157.

ing to the climate he inhabits, from the darkness of a Hindoo to the fairness of a Dane.[1]

Five races are named as springing from the Cushite stem—"Seba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Raamah, and Sabtechah." Of these, SEBA, "The Men," is said by Josephus[2] to be the ancient kingdom of Meroë, shut in, like an island, by branches of the Nile; and this identification is generally accepted as correct. It thus formed part of the present Nubia, immediately north of Kordofan, Sennaar, and Abyssinia: a position which, in antiquity, lay in the direct caravan-route between Arabia and India on the one hand, and Africa on the other, and brought wealth and prosperity to the country at large, especially to the towns. There are only two notices of Seba in Scripture; the one stating that its people were famous for their stature,[3] and the other speaking of them as strong and brave, "a people terrible from of old," who broke in pieces all who opposed them, and whose land was rich in streams.[4] Herodotus describes them, very similarly, as the tallest and handsomest of men, choosing their king for his stature and strength, and living often to the age of a hundred and twenty.[5]

HAVILAH, a name associated with the description of Eden, seems to have been applied, also, by the ancients to another widely distant region. Even in his day, Niebuhr

[1] When Jeremiah says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin?" (xiii. 23) there is no necessary implication that the race was negro; for there are still African races in these very parts, who while in some cases very dark, and in others black, have neither the features, the shape of skull, nor the woolly hair of the negro.

[2] *Ant.*, ii. 10, 2.

[3] Isa. xlv. 14.

[4] Isa. xviii. 2, 7. The translation given is that of Gesenius. See his JESAIA, on the verses. It is also, in effect, that of Knobel.

[5] iii. 20, 21.

found a place near the coast of the Persian Gulf, bearing the name of Huwaila, but this does not suit the mention of Havilah in connection with Ethiopian races dwelling in Africa. It seems rather to have been the region now known as Yemen, in South-western Arabia, where there was a place still known in Roman times as Uaila. It may, however, have been an African region at the mouth of the Red Sea, where the ancients named a bay Avalites. In either case it would lie in close neighbourhood to Seba.

SABTAH may perhaps be identified with the old Arab trading town of Sabbatha, or Sabota, which lay to the east of Yemen, the Havilah of many. If so, we only know that its chief city had in later times sixty temples, and that the trade in incense was kept jealously as its monopoly. RAAMAH was, possibly, the country lying still farther east than Sabtah, and reaching to the Persian Gulf, where there was formerly a place called Regma, the form in which the Greek Bible gives the name. SABTECHAH is fancied to have been a land still more easterly, forming the new Persian province of Caramania, opposite Regma, on the other side of the Persian Gulf. From Raamah two peoples are given as offshoots, SHEBA and DEDAN, in the former of which we can hardly be wrong in seeing the Sabæans of Arabia Felix, a nation famous in antiquity for their far reaching trade in the costly productions of their country—incense, balsam, myrrh, etc.[1] Such a commerce led to their being held as the richest nation of ancient times, and this added to the excitement caused by a visit of a Sabæan queen to Solomon, which is noticed minutely in the sacred history.[2] Her coming was in fact, in the eyes of the Israelites, one of the greatest honours that could have been paid to the house

[1] Job vi. 19. Ezek. xxvii. 22; xxxviii. 13.
[2] 1 Kings x. 1. 2 Chron. ix. 1.

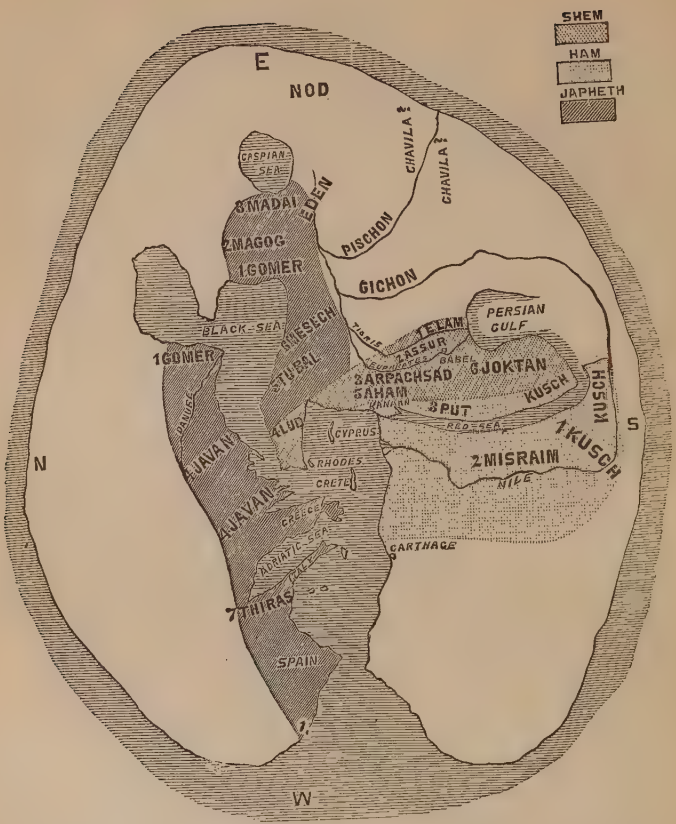


Chart of the World as known to the Ancient Hebrews. By Merx.

To the Hebrews, the East stood for our North, since the rising sun was the point from which they reckoned. The map is, therefore, placed on end; but if it be looked at sideways it will at once be intelligible. The Arabs to this day call the North "the left," the South "the right," and the East "that before" (facing the sun). Even so late as A.D. 1351, a sea chart, made at Florence, has the South at the top and the East on the left hand. The North is at the top of our maps as a result of the use of the compass.

The numbers mark the order in which the different nations are placed, counting from Pales ine, the centre of the whole, with a fresh notation in each direction.

of David. It was hence natural that Isaiah, in painting the glory of Messianic times, should speak of Sheba as bringing gold and incense in tribute to him,[1] and that its gold should be specially named by the Psalmist in a similar connection.[2]

DEDAN, which is always mentioned with Sheba, was the wide region of Arabia, north of the latter; gradually reaching, indeed, by the advance of the population, to the southern limits of Edom.[3] It is curious that we find another Dedan, and also another Sheba, among the descendants of Abraham.[4] This apparently rises from the peoples of both Dedan and Sheba having gradually spread northwards, first in caravan journeys, and finally in permanent settlements, among the tribes descended from Abraham, who lived in these parts; till the whole became a mixed race to which the common names still clung.[5] Nimrod, another descendant of Cush, will come before us hereafter.

[1] Isa. lx. 6. [2] Ps. lxxii. 15. [3] Jer. xlix. 8. [4] Gen. xxv. 3.
[5] Schrader, in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*. Steiner, in Schenkel's *Bibel Lexicon*.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE TABLE OF NATIONS.

MIZRAIM, the name of the second son of Ham, was that given to "the two Egypts," from the oldest times, among all Semitic nations; though they seem strictly to have applied it only to what is now Lower Egypt; dividing that into two districts: the Upper province being shut out from the knowledge of the ancient world till after the Persian invasion. It means "the fortified" or "shut in," in apparent allusion to the strong military wall which, for no less than 170 miles, protected the Nile valley from the Asiatic tribes.[1] The physical characteristics of the Egyptians, their language, and even their ideas, show that they were a branch of the Caucasian race;[2] immigration from the south, and the presence of aboriginal tribes, which led to a gradual mixture of blood, explaining the fact that the mummies and pictures of the earlier ages are nearest the Caucasian type, and further from the African than those of later date. It is impossible, indeed, to look at the old sculptures and

[1] Ebers' *Ægypten und die Bücher Mose's*, p. 79. Ebers thinks there were two walls, and that the dual form of the name may perhaps, have referred to these.

[2] See especially Eber's *Ægypten und die Bücher Mose's*, pp. 40–54.

paintings without feeling that they represent a people kindred to our own. There is, for example, in the Louvre collection, a figure of a scribe, of extreme antiquity, and in it the features are perfectly European, while the colour of the skin is a soft but light red. The kings, priests and soldiers particularly, who alone kept their blood pure, show that the race had come from the same home in which the Semitic stock had first lived.

Seven races or "sons" are traced to Mizraim, of which the first is the LUDIM,—meaning, like Seba, "The Men,"—and supposed to have been either the Egyptians themselves, or the Berbers of North Africa. The former opinion is supported by Ebers with much ingenuity, and certainly no people could have more haughtily fancied themselves men above all, than one which, like the Egyptians, despised every other race. "They held themselves," says Herodotus, "the best of all men."[1]

The ANAMIM are believed by Ebers and Brugsch to have been the same as the Amu; a Semitic tribe of shepherds who had settled in the flat and marshy pastures of the lower Delta and in part of the eastern side of Middle Egypt.[2] But the identification is, at best, only a conjecture.

The LEHABIM were the same race as the Lubim[3] or Libyans,[4] of other parts of Scripture, and the Lubu of the Egyptian monuments. On these they are described as the people living to the west of Egypt, and extending thence, under the general name of the Temhu, "to the outspread ocean" and "the setting sun." The Libyans of early ages were, strictly, the tribes inhabiting the region west of the Nile, from the coast of the Mediterranean to a considerable distance south, along the

[1] *Herod.*, ii. 121. [2] *Ægypten*, etc., p. 103.
[3] 2 Chron. xii. 3; xvi. 8. Nahum iii. 9. [4] In the Septuagint.

vast northern edge of Africa. They are represented on the monuments as bright-skinned, tattoed, clad in variegated coats, with pointed beards and marked Caucasian features; and indeed, were spoken of in Thebes and in the Delta, as "the white men of the west." Ebers has collected striking evidence to show that they originally came from the islands of the Mediterranean; attracted, it may be, by the fertility of the African coast, which the abundant ruins, still seen, attest to have been once far greater than it is now. Yet the Hebrew name Lehabim, like that given them by the Egyptians, means the inhabitants of a dry and thirsty land; so that, except a narrow fringe on the coast, the land must always have been comparatively desert.

The Naphtuchim and Pathrusim are simply the ancient territories of Memphis and Thebes, in their sacred name, as opposed to that used by the people—for every Egyptian town had two names, a sacred and a profane. Memphis and its district are mentioned first, perhaps from their higher antiquity; for Thebes, and the religion so zealously cultivated in its temples, rose to fame at a later period than the city of the Pyramid kings. The Pathrusim were the inhabitants of the city and district of the god Pa-Hathor; the Naphtuchim, those of the city and district of the god Ptah, but in neither case are we to think of any race distinct from the Egyptians around.

The Casluhim have been identified, with striking completeness, as a community which had settled in the district reaching from the eastern limits of the Nile overflow, along the sea coast, to the south borders of Palestine. Here lay, to the west of the "River of Egypt," —now Wady el Arîsh—and of the Serbonian bogs and Mount Casios,—a dry region, efflorescent with salt, which poisoned the soil and left only isolated spots fit for

culture. The salt, however, was an important article of commerce, for the Phenicians in the north, and in the Delta, were the great fish-salters of antiquity; and though the Egyptians abhorred sea-fish as unclean, and salt itself; Africa, as a whole, must have needed it in great quantities, and it could be readily transported in every direction, since the great road between Asia and Africa ran through the midst of the salt-producing district. The name Casluhim was, indeed, given the people, from Mount Casios in their territory; the Kas-lokh, or "dry" "burnt up hill" of the ancient Egyptians. They seem, according to Ebers, to have been of Phenician origin, but had become thoroughly Egyptian in their thoughts and ways.

In the Caphtorim, Ebers recognises settlements of Phenicians in the remotest ages on the edge of the Delta, before the Egyptians themselves had spread so far northwards; Kaft being the Egyptian name for that people and their colonies. He supposes that they first held the islands of the Greek Archipelago, including Crete, and thence emigrated to the Nile Delta; and supports this view with much learning. The Philistines, who are said in The Table to have entered Palestine from the land of the Casluhim, but in other passages to have come from the island of Caphtor or Crete, he regards as the remains of a powerful branch of the Caphtorim, who, reaching Egypt first, necessarily advanced towards Palestine, their final home, through the lands of the Casluhim. It is pleasant to see the accuracy of Scripture even in a point so minute as the movements of a tribe in the earliest antiquity, thus vindicated by modern scientific research. The old Jewish authorities, it may be added, read "inhabitants of Damietta," that is, of the coasts of the Delta, for Caphtorim.

This allusion to the migrations of tribes in the dawn of history, slight and brief though it be, throws a strange light on the greatest step in the progress of our race—the introduction of the alphabet. During their long settlement in Egypt, the Phenicians learned to represent sounds, by signs taken from the hieratic or priestly writing of Egypt; and these were carried first to Palestine, and spread thence to all the nations of the east and west. Originally from an island in the Persian Gulf, this race early launched out on the Mediterranean which washed the shores of their home at the foot of Lebanon, and spread, on the one hand, to the islands of the Levant and the Egean, and, on the other, to the still unhabited but rich coasts of the Egyptian Delta. There the fisheries forthwith opened a new branch of industry to a people with an instinctive genius for commerce. The salt of the land of the Casluhim and of Libya enabled them to begin fish-salting factories, like their brethren at Sidon in the north,—for "Sidon" means, according to some, simply the "fishing" place, though, according to others, it refers to the fact that one of the principal Phenician gods had the form of a fish. Settlements on the coast ere long spread to the south; for the Phenician was even more famous as a farmer than as a trader. The Nile mouths were then choked with the papyrus and other water plants which have now retreated to the south of Nubia. Huge crocodiles, hippopotami, and other great beasts abounded, and the reeds gave shelter to immense flocks of birds of many kinds. But the Egyptians from the south, and the Phenicians from the north, clearing their way, like the pioneers of to-day in the American bush, ere long met, and then began the familiar intercourse, to which, in the alphabet, we owe so much.

In PHUT or PUT, the third "son" of Ham, we may

recognise the country known in the hieroglyphics as Punt,—the modern Turkish province of Hejaz,—running back from the coast of the Red Sea, on the north half of its eastern side. The people of Punt sold themselves largely as mercenaries to Tyre and other powers; taking part, for example, under the standard of Egypt, in the battle of Carchemish,[1] though at other times fighting against her. They were also famous as traders in the markets of Tyre, sending thither the produce of their turquoise mines, which were famous over the world, and exporting large quantities of incense, for which their country bore a high repute. The inscriptions and pictures on the monuments represent them as wandering tribes of a deep brown colour, and strictly distinguish them from the settled Cushites, on whose confines they lived. Indeed, the name Punt, which means "flight," accurately marks their nomadic habits.

From CANAAN, the third "son" of Ham, the next on the list, no fewer than eleven peoples are named as directly or indirectly descended; Sidon, the first home of the Phenicians on the coast of Palestine, being justly represented as the earliest branch, or "first-born."

The name Canaan was itself originally applied to the Phenicians only, apparently by themselves, and to the sea-coast plain at the foot of Lebanon, on which Sidon, their earliest settlement, was built; with, perhaps, the fertile plain of Esdraelon and the fringe of level shore stretching southwards, towards Egypt. In the time of Moses and Joshua, however, it included the whole country on the west of the Jordan, but it never crossed that river. It means "the lowland," although, from the keen genius for trading peculiar to the Phenicians, a

[1] Jer. xlvi. 9. Ezek. xxvii. 10; xxx. 5. For Libya the Hebrew has Phut.

"Canaanite" afterwards became equivalent to a "trader." The word Phenician itself means originally brown, or dark red, and rose from the colour of the race,[1] but among themselves they bore the name of Canaanites, of which their Carthaginian brethren still boasted in the days of Augustine.

The assignment of the Phenicians, by Genesis, to the Hamite division of mankind, has been regarded as a serious difficulty, since their language was almost identical with that of the Hebrews and would thus rank them among Semitic peoples. But the division of nations in the Scripture Table is not founded on scientific distinctions of language. It rightly assigns to the races descended from Japheth the north of the world as then known; to the descendants of Shem the central zone; and to those of Ham the wide regions of the extreme south. Language could not, originally, have been a certain test of origin, for in the remote ages, when mankind diverged from the common centre in Asia, the families of speech must have been less clearly defined than they gradually became. Hamitic races may still have spoken a Semitic language, and carried it with them in their wanderings.

Moreover, the original home of the Phenicians goes far to corroborate the Bible statement of their descent from Ham; for we first meet with them making their way from Southern Arabia to what are now called the Bahrein Islands in the Persian Gulf. The temples still standing on these islands in Roman times, were evidently Phenician, and the inhabitants claimed to be the original stock of the famous race of Palestine. Their next resting place, still pressing north, was on the flat shores of the Persian Gulf, at the mouth of the Euphrates, called by them

[1] Kneucker, art. Phönizien, in *Bibel Lex.*

originally Canaan, or, as they pronounced it Chna, the "low-lying;" the name afterwards transferred by them to their home at the foot of Lebanon. The Himyarites, a kindred Arab people, with a language akin to theirs and to the Hebrew, and known like them, from their complexion, as the "red," remained behind in South Arabia. But the "Canaanites" chose to migrate to the coast of Palestine, whence they spread, as we have seen, to Egypt among other places; remaining for centuries at the mouths of the Nile, till Egyptian arts, inventions, modes of thought and religious ideas became common to both races, and re-acted on Sidon and Tyre: the morals, the degraded worship, and even the style of art thus introduced to Palestine, becoming only too sad a confirmation in the minds of the Hebrews, of the common origin of Mizraim and the "Canaanite."[1]

[1] Bertheau, *Geschichte der Israeliten*, p. 175, in his very full examination of this subject, says: "Under the Hamites we meet a number of peoples who spoke a language of the so-called Semitic stem. We must therefore say, that to give the name of Shemites to the races who spoke a tongue related to the Hebrew is contrary to the idea of Genesis, and bears in itself a false historical principle." As to the idea that the national hatred of the Canaanites led to their being assigned to Ham as their original, he shows that this hatred never led the Jews to disown tribes like Moab, Edom and Ammon, and that instead of hatred to Phenicia, there was friendship, culminating in the alliance between it and the kings of Judah. He adds: "Besides the inhabitants of Central and Northern Mesopotamia, all those people were reckoned Semitic who had spread from these parts, especially those who wandered to the south and south-west." If the reader wish to pursue the subject further, he will find it ably discussed in the arts. *Phönizien*, by Kneucker, and *Kanaan*, by Dillmann, in the *Bibel Lex.* of Schenkel; in Hitzig's *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, p. 26; in Knobel's *Völkertafel*, p. 305; in Knobel's *Genesis*, on the chapter; in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch;* Von Bohlen's *Genesis;* Herzog's *Encyklopädie*, etc.

The name HETH, which follows SIDON, was one of great dignity in the early history of Palestine. It is applied in the Assyrian inscriptions to all the "west peoples" of Syria,[1] as far as the sea coast, and in the same way the Egyptians knew Syria as the land of the "Cheta," or "Chatti." There, they were so strong, that one of their princes, alone, furnished a contingent of eighteen thousand troops, in the defence against Rameses II., whose triumph over the united forces of the race, reckoned his greatest achievement, is celebrated in lofty verse on no less than six different monuments and temples. But though the name be thus famous, the Hethites of Palestine, if of the same stock, must have been only a very limited and comparatively feeble tribe.[2] At the time of Abraham they lived at Hebron, and in that of Moses are found with the Amorites and Jebusites in the hill-country of Ephraim and Judah,[3] while under Solomon they were compelled to do forced labour on the public works.[4] Even so late as the times of Ezra, indeed, we find the Jews blamed for their connection with them.[5]

The JEBUSITES, next mentioned, took their name from Jebus, afterwards Jerusalem; the word Jebus meaning, apparently, in Canaanitish, "the waterless" hill; the town being named, as in later times, from the hill, as the site on which it was built.[6] They belonged to the much divided Canaanitish people, seemingly holding only Jerusalem and the district immediately round it; but their bravery and warlike spirit enabled them, notwithstanding

[1] Schrader's *Keilinschriften*, pp. 27, 31. They extended from the Euphrates to Asia Minor.

[2] Ebers' *Ægypten und die Bücher Mose's*, p. 286. Bertheau, however, thinks the two peoples the same, *Bib. Lex.* art. Hethiter.

[3] Gen. xxiii. Num. xiii. 29. Josh. xi. 3.

[4] 1 Kings ix. 20. [5] Ezra ix. 1.

[6] So, Zion was originally the hill of Jerusalem, not the town.

their limited population, to maintain their independence for centuries in the midst of the Israelitish invaders; nor were they subdued till the reign of David, who at last took their citadel.

The AMORITES appear elsewhere in Scripture, as another Canaanitish tribe living within the limits of Western Palestine. Their name shows them to have been "mountaineers," and their habit of building their towns on the top of the hills is recorded as having led the Hebrew spies to speak of them as "walled up to heaven." The prophet Amos describes them as a race of great stature,—tall as cedars and strong as oaks,[1]—language which seems to connect them with the gigantic races of the Refaim and the sons of Anak.[2] We find them living, in Abraham's day, in the south of Palestine, at Hazezon Tamar—the Palm-rows—and at Hebron,[3] but they also held part of Central Palestine.[4] In the time of Moses they appear on the hills of Judah, as far as Selah, or Petra, to the south, and in the districts to the east of Jordan, held formerly by the Refaim and other tribes;[5] where they had founded two strong kingdoms, ruled by Sihon and Og, extending from the river Arnon to the north of Bashan. It was to them, in league with other Canaanitish tribes, that Israel owed the repulse of its first attempt to enter Palestine from the south, and it was with them it had to fight for an entrance, a generation later, from the east of the Jordan. Sihon and Og, their kings in that region, were then crushed, and their country given to the Israelites; but the Amorites of the south were conquered only at a later time, by Judah. Those of Central Palestine kept possession of their towns even longer; but in the end, the wreck of the nation, with the surviving Canaanites of other tribes, were

[1] Amos ii. 9. [2] Num. xiii. 33. [3] Gen. xiv. 7, 13.
[4] Gen. xlviii. 22. [5] Gen. xiv. 5. Num. xiii. 30. Jud. i. 36.

forced to do service to Solomon.[1] Still, some remained even after the return of the Jews from exile, for Ezra expressly forbids marriages between them and the Israelites.

The GIRGASHITES lived somewhere in Central Palestine, but even Josephus could find no trace of them in his day.[2] There is an Armenian tradition, however, that they migrated, in the days of Joshua, to Armenia, and they have been thought, from this and the similarity of the words, to have been the progenitors of the Tcherkessen or Circassians, between the Black Sea and the river Kuban, —a fact which implies that they were not Semitic but Aryan.

The HIVITES appear in the days of the Patriarchs, at Shechem, and survived the doom pronounced against them when the land was conquered by Israel. The Gibeonites, who by their craft saved their lives, though made slaves for the service of the Tabernacle, were of this tribe. It is curious to notice that this incident reveals the existence of a republican form of government, by elders, at Gibeon, while the Hivites of Shechem appear as a free community under a prince: generous political ideas which seem to justify the usual derivation of the name of the tribe as meaning "the community."[3] Nor were they confined to Palestine proper, for we find them on the southern slopes of Lebanon, and even as far north as Hamath on the Orontes. But they had sunk in Solomon's time to a feeble remnant, toiling, like the other remnants of their countrymen, in forced labour, at the public works of the haughty Sultan. From his reign their name is not mentioned.[4]

[1] 1 Kings ix. 20, 21.
[2] *Ant.*, i. 6. 2.
[3] Ewald's *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 341.
[4] Jud. iii. 3. 1 Kings ix. 30.

The ARKITES were a small tribe of Canaanites living far to the north, on the coast of Palestine, about sixty miles beyond the present Beyrout. The name still clings there to the ruins of a town, in the midst of which rises a mound a hundred feet high, which was a fortress in the times of the crusades. The SINITES were an even more obscure tribe, who had a town called Sini, and a small district round it, on the western slope of the Lebanon chain, to the north of Arki; the old name lingering still, in the days of Jerome, though the town had perished. Two communities so comparatively feeble may have been mentioned from the fact that, according to Josephus, Arki was included in the limits of the tribe of Asher and was embraced in the kingdom of Solomon.[1] In the ARVADITES we have the population of the island town of Aradus, and of the island of that name on which it stood; a spot of only about four-fifths of a mile in circuit, off the Phenician coast, north of Tripolis; receiving its name, like Tyre, from islands in the Persian Gulf from which the populations of these places had originally come. The inhabitants of Aradus though bold sailors and brave soldiers, were as keen traders, and swarmed so thick in their little town that the houses had to be built storey on storey to accommodate them.[2] The island is now called Ruweida, and appears to have been entirely surrounded in ancient times with a wall of great hewn stones, and even to have had a double wall on its north and west sides.

The ZEMARITES were another Phenician tribe, which seems, beyond doubt, to have had its seat at the Phenician fortified town of Smyrna, near the river Eleutherus, at the western base of the Lebanon chain. The name, indeed, exactly suits the locality, for it is from the

[1] *Ant.*, i. 6, 2; v. 1, 22; viii. 2, 3. Compare Josh. xiii. 5; xix. 28.
[2] *Strabo*, xvi. 753.

Arabic, "samara" "to flow or rush down," and could not be more expressive of a population living on steep mountain slopes, amidst rushing hill streams. HAMATH, the last of the "sons" of Canaan, was a strong town on the Orontes, in the valley of Lebanon, and held for a time a not inconsiderable territory in subjection. It was originally, like Aradus, a Phenician colony, and was ruled by a king of its own in the time of David. From its position on the great line of Phenician trade with the Euphrates, Hamath early became rich, but it was taken by Jeroboam II. and annexed to the territory of Israel.

In this long list of Canaanitish peoples the names, with the exception of Sidon, run from the south to the north, and coincide with the limits of the Jewish kingdom, at least as originally designed. The specification of races by the sacred writer is naturally more minute in treating of the population of his own country.

The nations of Africa, Arabia, and Palestine, having been enumerated among the descendants of Ham; as those of Northern Asia and of Europe had been in connection with Japheth; those traced to Shem alone remain. Of these, the first is ELAM—the High Land—an extensive country on the east side of the lower Tigris, bordered on the west by the province of Babylon, on the north by Assyria and Media, and on the south by the Persian Gulf. It thus embraced parts of the present Laristan, Chusistan, and Arabistan; a picturesque, mountainous region: its capital, at least in later times, being the famous city of Shushan, so often mentioned in Daniel as a royal residence of the kings of Babylon, and in Esther as a favourite with the kings of Persia. Lying farthest to the south-east of the various Semitic nationalities, and bordering the Medes, who are with strict appropriateness assigned to the Japhetic or Indo-Germanic stock, Elam,

from the remotest ages, maintained a constant historical connection with its Semitic neighbours. It is not indeed known whether the Elamites spoke a distinctly Semitic language—that is, one related to the Syriac, Hebrew, Arabic, and Ethiopic; but the classification of mankind in The Table under three great divisions is based neither on the colour, nor on the grouping together of like languages according to their respective families, but on the historical relations of the various peoples. It has been thought by some that the Elamites may have spoken an Aryan rather than a Semitic language, but all proofs of this are wanting.[1] It is far more probable, that a people expressly named as Semitic in the Genesis list, and always from the earliest periods maintaining a historical connection with the other nations of that race, spoke a language related to the Assyrian and Babylonian—that is, one of the so-called Semitic languages. Nor would this be at all affected by the possibility that as Aryan races like the Persian pressed into the land, a mixed language may gradually have come to be spoken.[2] The incidental notice of Scripture is thus supported by historical probability of the strongest kind.

It is a curious evidence of the antiquity as well as correctness of the Table in Genesis, that though it mentions Elam, it knows nothing of Persia. The explanation lies in the fact, that till the rise of Cyrus in the sixth century before Christ, Persia was alike unimportant and unknown.

The second "son" of Shem mentioned,[3] is the world-famous Asshur, or Assyria, a name already occurring in

[1] See the remarks of such an accomplished scholar as Schrader, art. Elam, Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*. Also Renan's *Histoire Générale des Langues Sémitiques*. 2nd ed. p. 41.

[2] Dillmann, in art. Elam, in *Bibel Lex.*

[3] Gen. x. 22.

a preceding verse, where it is said, that Asshur went out of the land of Shinar and built Nineveh and other cities, or rather, as it should be read, "He, Nimrod, went out of that land (Babylon) into Assyria, and built Nineveh." That Babylon, as a kingdom, thus preceded Assyria, has been confirmed by the latest researches; and Assyrian tablets, recovered in such numbers from Nineveh, as well as the facial type of the people on the monuments, prove that the Bible rightly assigns the inhabitants to the Semitic branch of the Caucasian race. The language, indeed, was the same as that of Babylon, and the writing in use only that of the Babylonian district simplified, while even in religion the later state borrowed from the earlier. Strange to say—or, rather, not strange—although Scripture had for thousands of years described Assyria as of Semitic origin, the discoveries of recent years show that it would have been easy to have assigned it wrongly to another origin; for the rapid progress made in deciphering the arrow-headed writing peculiar to these regions, has shown that an earlier race —the Accadian—apparently of Turanian or Tartar origin, had first established themselves on the Euphrates, and introduced a culture and polity wonderfully developed for so remote an age. From them the Babylonians and Assyrians borrowed their writing, their earliest religion, and much else; so that it would have been natural to have spoken of them, rather than of a Semitic people, as founding Assyria, as was, however, the case. The Accadians were the old Babylonians, but Assyria was from the first Semitic. The word Assur, itself, is the name of the chief god of the Assyrians, as if they had deified their founder. The limits of ancient Assyria, at first, were very small; embracing nearly the same region as the Roman province of Adiabene, or

the southern part of the modern Turkish province of Kurdistan, far up towards the sources of the Tigris, and immediately south of ancient Armenia—that is, on a line with the modern Aleppo, and the south coast of Asia Minor. It was thus, to the Hebrews in Palestine, at all times, a strictly northern power, and is constantly spoken of as such in the Prophets.

It has been a much disputed question, how races of so-called different stems, like the Cushite Babylonians and the Semitic Assyrians, spoke the same language; but the difficulty seems to rise from the improper use of the expression "Semitic." A number, if not the majority of the peoples traced in Genesis to Ham, in particular the Cushites, spoke languages of this class. The Hebrew, in fact, was originally only the idiom of the Canaanites, a population especially Hamite. Isaiah even calls it "the language of Canaan."[1] It was from living for generations among the Canaanites, that Abraham and his descendants adopted it instead of the language which they formerly spoke: a dialect most probably nearer the Arabic, if we may judge from the original relations of Heber, the founder of the Hebrews, and Joktan, the ancestor of the Arab race.[2] The separation of the tribes which became the ancestors of the Cushites, from the others of the same stock, who are called the ancestors of the Semitic race, —the former abandoning nomadic habits, the latter retaining them—was thus the division known as that of the descendants of Ham from those of Shem. The former went off to the south and west, the others to the north and east,—though all were members of the same original family, speaking the same language in different dialects, and professing the same religion under different symbols. It is not too much, therefore, to speak of

[1] Isa. xix. 18. [2] Lenormant, *La Magie, etc.* p. 277.

them ethnographically as a common family[1]—the Syro-Arabic or the Syro-Ethiopic, in opposition to the Indo-Persian or Indo-Germanic, another great division of the white race.[2] Thus the Bible has been right from the first in classing races which spoke so-called Semitic languages, as sprung from Ham, though it is only now that modern science, at this late day has made the discovery which Scripture had pointed out with unerring exactness for thousands of years.[3]

Still ascending the great river, we next meet the name ARPHAXAD, or Arpachshad, a district to the north of Assyria proper, and north-east of the Upper Tigris; apparently the table land between the lakes Urumiah and Van, and thus only about a hundred miles south of Kars, in Asia Minor. Arphaxad is stated to have been the

[1] Whether the Turanian race was nearer to the Hamitic or to the Semitic family, is one of the most difficult problems of ethnology. The most probable opinion seems to be that the Turanian was the stage of speech which the different races carried with them when they first left their primeval seats; that it was developed by the race of Ham, who, as the earliest cultivators of science and art, would be the first to require new forms of language, into the stage seen in the Hamitic dialects of Africa and Southern Asia: and that these were again modified, by contact with Semitic races, into the forms of speech called Semitic. The Aryan languages seem to have passed out of the Turanian stage by a still more direct process. Smith's *Ancient History*, p. 54.

Of the science of language Max Müller says:—

"It leads us up to that highest summit from whence we see into the very dawn of man's life on earth, and when the words which we have heard so often in our childhood, 'And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech,' assume a meaning more natural, more intelligible, more convincing, than they ever had before." *Science of Language*, vol. i. p. 409.

[2] Guigniant, *Religions de l'Antiquité*, vol. ii. p. 822.

[3] The description of the Ethiopians in *Herod.*, iii. 21, is very noteworthy.

ancestor of Abraham, at the distance of seven generations; but it cannot be certain whether it is only intended by this that the region called Arphaxad was the cradle of the Hebrew branch of the Semitic race, or whether the name is that of an individual, for the tribe living in a district, has, throughout the list, the name of the district assigned it.

In Lud, the fourth "son" of Shem, it has been the prevailing belief, since the time of Josephus, that the land and people of Lydia, in Asia Minor, are intended. The order of the names in the list strengthens this opinion, for, beginning with Elam, in the south-east, the countries named go regularly north-west, till, in Lydia, they turn west; to end in the south with Aram or Syria, which lies near it. Enough is not as yet known of the language of the Lydians to judge confidently whether it was Semitic; but Lagarde,[1] a keen and accomplished scholar, by no means biassed on the side of the Bible, recognises a Semitic element in it, and concludes that it must have belonged to this stock. There is besides, in Herodotus,[2] a tradition that the first king of the Lydians was a son of Ninus and grandson of Belus, which seems to point to a Semitic origin for the community. Even as regards their language, moreover, it is not to be forgotten, that were the proofs of its being Semitic deemed insufficient, the fact would be as little decisive of a difference of race as it is in other cases.[3] Lydia, it may be added, is not to be limited in early ages to the bounds of the later state, but was rather a wide undefined region.

Aram was originally the name of a small division of the so-called Aramaic, or Syrian branch of the Semitic race. In the Assyrian inscriptions it is applied to the North

[1] *Gesammelten Abhandlungen*, Leipzig, 1866. [2] i. 7.
[3] Prof. Dr. Kautzsch, in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*, art. Lud.

and East Arameans, and included the people of Hamath in Upper Lebanon, and Harran on the Upper Euphrates, or in other words, the region from Northern Mesopotamia to Upper Syria.[1] But it early came to be used of all the nations speaking Aramaic and reckoned Semitic; so far as they were not included in Elam, Assur, Lud, and Arphaxad. All such races, whether living in Armenia on the north; in the districts of Taurus and Lebanon on the west; in North Palestine; in the Arabian desert in the south; and, in the east, on the Euphrates and Tigris, were thus Aramaic or Syrian,[2] though these widely separate regions were not all reckoned as Aram or Syria, which is an abbreviation of Assyria, at least as old as Herodotus.[3] Its wide bounds are seen in the fact that in Arabic it is simply called "the North Land," in contrast to Yemen or the "South Land"—that is, in contrast to Arabia proper. "Aram," means apparently "Highland," and thus points to its having been originally used of the mountainous and upland districts of the higher Tigris and the Taurus range, which stretches, thence, westwards, into Asia Minor.

Four names are given as the children of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether and Mash, the first of which, Uz, is famous as the home of the patriarch Job. As such it has been a subject of great interest and much discussion, but the latest and most thorough re-examination of the whole matter has, apparently on good grounds, identified it with Bashan, on the east of the Jordan; including the districts of Batanaea, Trachonitis, the Hauran and Iturea, but not Gilead. In this region tradition has placed "the Land of Job"[4] and the people still speak of it by that

[1] Schrader's *Keilinschriften*, p. 33.
[2] Schrader, art. Aram. *Riehm.*
[3] *Herod.*, vii. 63.
[4] *Das Buch Hiob.* Delitsch (1864), p. 507.

name, assigning his home to the most fruitful part in the Hauran plains. Here there is still a hamlet known as "Job's place," and springs in which, according to the Koran, Job bathed after his recovery. Fifteen hundred years ago we find this locality noted by Eusebius[1] as the country of the patriarch, and Chrysostom[2] speaks of the people making pilgrimages to it from all parts of the world, to see the ash heaps on which Job sat, and to kiss the ground made sacred by his memory. Nor is there any difficulty in the fact that his home is at times spoken of as in Arabia, for that name was used of the Hauran; its southern town, Bozra, being reckoned in Arabia by Josephus,[3] who even assigns the Hauran as the country of Uz, the reputed founder of Damascus and Trachonitis.[4]

HUL seems to be most correctly identified as the district round the Lake Merom still known as el Huleh; in part a swampy region, with dense beds of reeds, long after the delight of Herod the Great, as a covert for the wild boars and other large game he loved so well to hunt. But the land rises on the west to over a thousand feet, and to a still greater elevation on the east, though the whole district is not more than five or six miles broad, and about twenty from north to south. GETHER, the third name, seems to have been the district of Iturea, lying between Uz or the Hauran on the east, and Hul or el Huleh, on the west;[5] perhaps the district from which, as the kingdom of Geshur, David got his wife Maacah, the

[1] Died A.D. 340.

[2] Died A.D. 407.

[3] *Ant.*, iv. 7, 4.

[4] *Ant.*, i. 6, 4. Hitzig, *Das Buch Hiob*, Leipzig (1874), also places Uz in the Hauran. So does Merx.

[5] Merx, in *Bib. Lex.*, vol. i. p. 542.

mother of Absalom.[1] MASH, which is given as Mesech in the Septuagint, was possibly the district of Mount Masios in Northern Mesopotamia,[2] immediately south of Armenia, but there seems a greater probability that a trace of it may still be found not far from el Huleh in a site known as *Mais* el Jebel.[3]

The list now becomes more directly genealogical, introducing the descendants of Arphaxad, in whom we recognise known historic names. Of these, the first, SALAH, or Shelach, means "sending out," and his first-born is EBER, the "crossing over," or "the farther side."[4] The name is however used by Balaam[5] as that of a country; no doubt part of Mesopotamia: an instance of the difficulty there is in knowing when these names refer to historic personages, and when to the country from which individuals or races sprang. We have, in all likelihood, in Shelach and Eber a hint of the original migration of the forefathers of the Hebrews from their mountain homes in the far north-east to the fertile plains of Mesopotamia, on the south-west; it may be yielding to the pressure of Central Asian tribes, who from the earliest ages were restlessly advancing towards the south and west. After Eber, we are told, the smaller section of the Chaldean Semitic race of which he was the head divided, under his two "sons," Peleg "division," or "separation," and Joktan "made small," and henceforth lived as distinct peoples. Those connected with Joktan wandered southwards towards Arabia, where they apparently joined a number of Cushite tribes who had already made it their

[1] Thomson's *Land and the Book*, p. 251.
[2] Knobel, *Völkertafel* p. 237.
[3] Thomson's *Land and the Book*, p. 25.
[4] Kneucker translates Eber as "coast," "shore," "shoreland."
[5] Num. xxiv. 24.

home, forming thus a mixed people, proud of their connection with Cush; who linked them more closely with the great patriarch Noah, than they had been under Heber, their own immediate head. The same course repeated itself at a later time, in a similar mingling of tribes springing from Abraham, with like Cushite peoples; and in this way the occurrence of the same names in the descendants of Cush and of Abraham may be easily explained. The locality of Peleg's settlement, for the time, appears to have been where the river Chaboras falls into the Euphrates from the east, about half way down its course. The name Phaliga, formerly a town at that spot, seems to mark it as the ancient home of the Peleg tribe. The thirteen tribes descended from Joktan can only be traced, as a whole, to Arabia; the interior of that country being too little known to warrant anything more.

The country ranged over by these Arab tribes is said to have extended from "Mescha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a mount of the east;" the former, apparently the district and town of Mesene, known to antiquity in the sandy parts near Bassorah, at the mouths of the Euphrates and Tigris, on the Persian Gulf. "Sephar, a mount of the east," on the other hand, seems to be well identified in Zafar, the anciently famous harbour and royal city of the Himyarite kingdom, still known as Isfôr, on the south-east coast of Arabia. Over that vast stretch of country, largely desert, their wandering tribes could find abundant pasture.

Thus closes the venerable document, which Sir Henry Rawlinson justly calls, "the most authentic record we possess for the affiliation of nations."[1] Its historical exactness, recalls the article of Jewish faith which maintains that its verses are as fully and directly inspired

[1] *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, vol. xv. p. 230.

as the words "I am the Lord your God."[1] But it is also of the utmost value for the proof it gives of the limited conception of the world by the ancient Hebrews. The north edge of Africa, not very far below Egypt, Arabia, Elam, a fringe of unknown territory north of Armenia, and the Black Sea; Thessaly, Greece, part of Italy, and the islands of the Mediterranean, embrace in their circle the whole Hebrew earth, with the exception of Tarshish in Spain, known in the days of Moses, or even earlier.[2]

[1] Ryland's *Synagoga Judaica*, p. 20.

[2] In illustration of this, see the map, p. 242.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRST GLIMPSES OF NATIONAL HISTORY.

THE earliest movements of mankind in Western Asia, as disclosed by the study of the most ancient records, preserved at Babylon and Nineveh; by the brief notices of ancient writers; and by modern philological investigations, show that in prehistoric times a vast migration of tribes related to the Mongol race, and known by the general name of Turanian, passed from Central Asia, in different directions. Known under the name of Scythians, among the ancients, and reckoned by them "the most ancient of men," this great division of mankind includes in our day the Finns and Lapps of Northern Europe, the Basques of Spain, the Turks and Turcomans of Central Asia, the Hungarians, the tribes of Northern Siberia, and the teeming myriads of China and Japan. Once stretching from the Amoor to the farthest west, they have now rather changed than diminished their wide range. The very different types of mankind seen in this great race as we know it to-day, seem to have sprung from a mixture of the white and the yellow families of men; for some nations have all the characteristics of the whites, others are identical with the yellow, and between these there are varieties which connect the most perfect European type with that of the Chinese.

A tradition still current among the wandering Turcomans of Asia, places its cradle a little north of the table land of Pamir, in one of the valleys of the Altai mountains. Starting thence, one part of it sought the west, and spread to the extremities of Europe; where the Basques of Spain and some of the Pyrenean populations are, perhaps, its last representatives. Another portion, wandering south, occupied the plains of Bactria, crossed the Hindoo Koosh, and made its home, at first, on the border of the table-land of Iran or Persia, where it established itself in the region afterwards known as Media. Several tribes, however, wandered on to Atropatene, to Armenia, and even, as we have seen, to Asia Minor. Others again pushed to the south and fixed their homes in the uplands and plains of Susiana, and on the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

These earliest known inhabitants of Mesopotamia were called among themselves "the Accadians" or "Mountaineers;" a name brought with them from the mountain land in the far north-east from which their race had migrated. Before reaching the Euphrates they had already become an organized nation, possessing a peculiar form of writing, the chief necessary industries of civilization, and a systematized legislation and religion. Their alphabet, like that of the Egyptians, was at first purely hieroglyphic; each sign being a picture of the object desired to be represented, or of something nearest the idea to be expressed. Thus "God" was indicated by a star with eight rays; a king by the figure of a bee; but these signs, erelong, passed into rude imitations of their original form, and thus led to the system known as the cuneiform, or arrowhead, or wedge-shaped characters.

Besides writing, however, these Accadians knew the

use of both the common and precious metals, for they had learned the art of mining in the rich mountain regions of Tibet, their first home. Their oldest tombs contain objects in gold, and in bronze and iron; knives hatchets, scythes, bracelets, and chased earrings.[1] But, side by side with these, are found flint arms and implements, heads of arrows, axes, and hammers. Iron was the scarcest metal amongst them, and, as such, the most precious.[2] The only fragment we possess of their laws treats of the relations and rights of the family, which closely resemble those prevalent among the ancient Finns and Lapps, in the special importance ascribed to the wife, who could hold property even after marriage. To deny his mother excluded a son from earth and water; to deny a father only entailed a fine.[3] Nothing can be more strangely new, though little could be more convincing, than the proofs by which modern scholars identify this long vanished branch of a great race with the still surviving section of Turanians known as the Ougro-Finnish. But, unlikely though it seems, there is every reason to believe that a close relationship of blood existed between the Magyar and the modern Finlander on the one hand, and the earliest settlers of Chaldea on the other.[4]

This Turanian race had been established, we know not how long, on the Euphrates and Tigris, when a people of another stock appeared, disputing their territory and ultimately overpowering them. These were a branch of the Cushites or Ethiopian stock, a people very distinct from the negro. Short in stature, thin and well made;

[1] Rawlinson's *Five Great Monarchies*, vol. i. pp. 98, 99.
[2] Lenormant, *Les Premières Civilizations*, vol. i. pp. 118, 119.
[3] Lenormant, *La Magie chez les Chaldéens*, p. 311.
[4] Lenormant, *Ibid.* passim.

their abundant hair, often curly, was never crisped like that of the negro; dark-coloured but varying from clear brown to black, their features were regular, often delicate; the brow straight, narrow, and often high; the nose long, thin, and fine, but the lips thick and fleshy. Spreading every way from Western Asia, the mother of nations, some tribes settled at the foot of the range still known as the Hindoo Koosh. Others wandered on to Asia Minor, where the Carians were said to be their descendants. The hardiest, crossing Persia and Arabia, reached the Straits of Bab el Mandeb, and passing over into Africa, settled on the Blue Nile, where their posterity, the "vile Cushites," were for many ages the mortal enemies of the Egyptians. From the mouths of the Indus they had spread, southwards, along the western shores of India, to the Malabar Coast, and westwards, along the coast of what is now Beloochistan, and the edges of the Persian Gulf. In Arabia they fringed the land on the east and south, and passing into Africa reached the regions of Sofala—that is, as far south as the colony of Natal; and penetrated, by the straits of Bab el Mandeb, along the western side of the Red Sea, to the Elanitic Gulf, which bounds the peninsula of Sinai on the east. Their energy, indeed, broke beyond these bounds, for we can follow them along the edge of the Mediterranean, from the Delta of Egypt to the shores of Palestine.[1] On these shores, indeed, they found their most famous home as the Phenicians of Sidon and Tyre; the "Canaanites" of the Bible. Thus, from the Indus to the Mediterranean, and from the coasts of Palestine to the far south of Africa, the race of Cush everywhere showed itself; nor can it be wrong to regard it as perhaps the most important of all the great primitive races of mankind. Its fame, indeed, spread

[1] D'Eckstein, in *L'Athenæum Français*, April 22, 1854.

through all antiquity, for the Greek poets commemorate the Cushite Memnon, the founder of Susa and the ally of Priam, while Homer celebrates the Ethiopians as the wisest and remotest of men, of whom part dwelt at the rising and part at the setting sun.[1]

The Cushites spoke a language very closely allied to the Hebrew, Arabic, and other Semitic idioms; as if they and the Semitic races had originally lived together and been of the same stock, as we indeed know from Genesis they originally were, though civilized at different periods. They were, in fact, a branch of the great Semitic family which had earliest left the common centre, and having first among the tribes known by that name, abandoned the nomadic life and risen to civilization, drew down on themselves for doing so, at once the envy and hatred of the other branches of the race which kept to their pastoral life.[2]

Three of the chief Cushite[3] peoples chose the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf; one the Kossians or Kissiens of the classics, settling in the mountainous region on the east of the Tigris, afterwards known as Susiana; a second fixing their dwelling in the lower regions of the Euphrates and Tigris; a third colonising the southern shores and the off-lying islands of the Persian Gulf, whence in later times they emigrated to the Mediterranean, to become the Phenicians of the Palestine coasts.[4]

[1] *Odyss.*, i. 23, 24.

[2] Creutzer and Guigniant, *Religions de l'Antiquité*, vol. ii. pt. 3, pp. 8, 22.

[3] The name is often spelt Koushite, but the Bible spelling is retained as better known.

[4] Oppert fixes on the island of Bahrein in the Persian Gulf as the original seat of the Phenicians. There was a place called

It was from a division of this great race, coming "eastward" from Arabia, settled at the mouths of the Euphrates and Tigris, that the first great wars of conquest rose of which we have mention. In a period before the historical monuments that still survive, a Cushite chieftain of this region, Nimrod by name, the Alexander of his day, conquered, apparently after a fierce struggle, the Accadians, of the Turanian race, already settled in Mesopotamia. Jewish legend has traced his name to a verb meaning "to rebel," but this etymology is more than doubtful. It seems, indeed, more likely that it means "the glorious" or "splendid," and that it was given to the founder of the Cushite dynasty as that of the god Amarud or Marduk—the planet Jupiter—an old Accadian deity, with whom it was thus sought to make him one.[1] It may be that we have a reminiscence of it in the ancient town of Nipour or Nipra, in Babylonia; a place identified in the Talmud with the Biblical town of Calneh.[2] Like many conquerors, Nimrod bore the fame of a mighty hunter; no mean advantage in an age when forest and waste were still so largely unsubdued. That his name filled the ear of the world in his own distant day is sufficiently proved by the fact that, with those of Solomon and Alexander the Great, it has still a mysterious grandeur among all the peoples of Western Asia.

"The beginning of his kingdom," we read, was Babel—and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar,[3]

Tyrus there. *Proceedings of Society of Bib. Archæol.* (Nov. 4, 1879). Maspero is of the same opinion. *Histoire Ancienne*, p. 145.

[1] *Joma*, x. *a*. Schrader repudiates this identification. Lenormant quotes it without remark. Marduk = Merodach.

[2] Grivel, in *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iii. pp. 136 ff.

[3] Gen. x. 10.

places, the population of which is indicated as Accadian from the mention of Accad as one of them. Of these early cities, Babel—the gate, or temple of the god El, afterwards known as the mighty Babylon—needs no identification. In Erech, or Moon-town,[1] we have, doubtless, the Arka of the monuments, and the Warka of to-day; a place, apparently, even in the earliest ages, the great Necropolis of the Babylonians,[2] as it still is of the natives of that region, die where they may.[3] It lies south of Babylon, on the west side of the Euphrates. Accad is not identified as yet, nor is Calneh, but they both, doubtless, lay in the lower part of Mesopotamia.

This prehistoric conquest still finds a silent corroboration in the earliest monuments that have been preserved. On these, the two distinct elements of the population of Chaldea and Babylon created by it, are recorded—the Sumirs, or "dwellers on the river," and the Accads, or "mountaineers,"—the former, specially inhabitants of the "land of Sumir" or Shinar;[4] the latter of the "land of the Accadians;" terms constantly used together on the monuments for Babylon as a political whole. The fusion of these two races, the Sumirs, a Cushite branch of the Semitic stock, and the Accads, produced, in the course of time, the Chaldean nation known in history.

This mingled population of two different stocks, which history at its dawn introduces to us as occupying the soil of Babylonia, found neither quarries, nor mines, from which to extract stone for their building, or metals for their use. Perhaps, like the Chaldean Arabs of to-day,

[1] Oppert. [2] Schrader's *Keilinschriften*, p. 18.

[3] Loftus (*Chaldea*) gives a terrible account of the transport of caravans of corpses from vast distances, at the present day, for burial at Warka.

[4] Shinar is only a varying form of Sumir, in Accadian.

their first habitations were no more than huts of wattled osiers covered with mats. But, if so, they soon employed more solid material in the wood of the palm, and burnt, or sun-dried bricks, for the oldest ruins as yet known are those of gigantic buildings of these materials. Thus, among the various mounds on the site of Babylon, marking the scene of so much ancient splendour, one, 130 feet high and nearly 600 long, has been found, covering the remains of an ancient temple to the god Merodach. This vast structure seems to have been a square pyramid of over 600 feet high, and as long on each side, at its base—or 200 feet higher than the cross on St. Paul's, and 100 feet longer each way than the length of St. Paul's, east and west.[1] Its extreme age is proved by its secret name, Saggatu, "the high temple"—an old Accadian word.[2] An inscription of Nebuchadnezzar, one of the greatest builders among the Babylonian kings, shows us that he restored it 600 years before Christ, but it had already been repaired, as a venerable relic of antiquity, by Tiglath Pileser, a century earlier. It is at Borsippa, however, more than twelve miles, in a straight line, from the huge mound known as Babel, that we find the most interesting trace of the earliest ages of Babylon, in the vast heap which has immemorially borne the name of Birs[3] Nimrud, or the Tower of Nimrod. This great ruin, a bare hill of yellow sand and bricks, near the left bank of the Euphrates, reaches a height of 198 feet: a vast mass of brickwork jutting from the mound, to a further height of 37 feet, making 235 in all. It is ascended by a ravine on the south-east side, which rises gently, over

[1] *English Cyclo.*, art. London.

[2] Schrader, art. Babel, in *Riehm.*

[3] Borsippa is the old name—*Barsip*, of a "quarter" of Babylon *Riehm.* Oppert, at this place, found bricks marked "Barsip."

what appears a hill of shapeless earth, but proves at once on examination to be the remains of brickwork; the plain of Babylon, as we may remind the reader, furnishing no other material for the grandest constructions than the clay around, baked in the sun or burnt. From the top of the hill the eye ranges over the vast landscape, but the huge fragment of Nebuchadnezzar's tower, built of pale red bricks, rises, in massive strength, nearly 40 feet higher. A bed of lichens covers almost its whole surface—a proof, under such a sky, of the vast age of the ruin. Numerous birds find shelter in its cracks and rifts, and, all round, the ground is strewn with fragments and masses of bricks, fallen from above. Of these some are yellow, others blue or dark green; many of the larger blocks showing proofs of having been exposed to intense heat.[1] So fierce, indeed, has been the fire, that the layers of bricks still visible in their place are twisted and waved from their original horizontal position. Still, few ruins in the world can compare with Birs Nimrud for simple grandeur.[2]

The original form of the whole structure, known to the Greeks as the Temple of Belus, was that of seven square towers, rising one above the other, like gigantic steps; each smaller than the one below it, and consecrated respectively to the seven planetary gods, to whom they formed distinct temples. Beginning with that of Saturn at the bottom, that of Venus came next; then, one over the other, those of Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, the Moon, and the Sun; the colours assigned to the particular deity—

[1] The words in Genesis for "let us make bricks," are almost identical with those meaning the same in Assyrian inscriptions. It is striking to notice that bitumen has been used for mortar at Birs Nimrud, in strict accordance with Genesis xi. 3.

[2] Oppert, *Expédition en Mésopotamie*, vol. i. p. 204.

black, white, orange, blue, scarlet, silver, and gold—distinguishing the respective storeys. The construction in platforms of diminishing size was not uncommon, for a tower of the same character, at Khorsabad, still shows the remains of four. Herodotus describes this one as standing in an enclosure 1,200 feet square, and as, itself, 606 feet square at the base; Strabo adding its height as also a stadium; which would make it half as high again as the cross on St. Paul's. The ascent was made, we are told, by a winding path round the outside, with a landing place, and seats for resting, about the middle of the way up; while in the uppermost tower there was a spacious temple with an apartment splendidly furnished, in which stood a couch, and by its side a table of gold,[1] for the accommodation of Nebo, the god to whom the whole was dedicated; but there was no image of the god in it, though a priestess slept in the chamber at night. In the temple on the lowest step, there was a golden image of Belus on a throne of gold, before a golden table, set on a golden floor; and another golden statue of the god, 24 feet high, stood in the temple enclosure, till Xerxes took both away.

If the measurements thus given by these ancient authorities be correct, the building must have been indeed immense, for the Great Pyramid itself is only 750 feet square at its base, and rises to a height of only 480 feet; whereas this tower, from a square base of over 600 feet, rose 120 feet higher. Its vastness may indeed be gathered from the fact that Alexander the Great employed 10,000 men for two months in removing the rubbish which at his day had fallen from it. Nor is there any good ground for questioning the correctness of

[1] Strabo speaks of the "Tomb of Belus," but it is clear that he means the tower.

the old Greek historian, for the tower was still standing in something like completeness when he was in Babylon, though Xerxes had rifled it of its treasures and dug into it in search of them.

Doubt has, however, been thrown on these ancient accounts, by the apparent contradiction between this mountain-like height and the more humble proportions of a great tower, repaired by Nebuchadnezzar, which seems to have been the same temple of Belus. Two copies of an inscription, record his having repaired and completed "The Temple of the Seven Lights or Planets," of the earth; a name which exactly suits the description of the tower of Borsippa, as indeed it is also called. It had hitherto remained unfinished, from immemorial antiquity; a fact strikingly corroborative of the narrative of Genesis. Nebuchadnezzar, however, tells us in royal style, "An earlier king had built the Temple of the Seven Lights of the Earth, the Tower of Borsippa, to a height reckoned at eighty-four feet,—but he had not completed it, and many days had passed since then. There was no proper management of the outflow-canals for the water of the place. Rain and storm had washed out the burned bricks, and the sun-dried bricks of its roofing were cracked. The burned bricks of the Temple itself had, also, been washed away into heaps of ruin. The great god Merodach put it into my mind to repair it; but I did not meddle with the site and I left the foundation walls untouched. In a prosperous month and on a lucky day I repaired the burned bricks of the body of the building, and the sun-dried bricks of the roofing, joining them fast by mason-work; and I renewed the woodwork and set my name on the top of its rebuilt walls. I raised my hand to finish it and to set up its top. I rebuilt it as it had been of old, and raised

its top as it had been in those days."[1] Schrader understands that Nebuchadnezzar added 84 feet to the already existing tower, thus making it 168 feet high in all, but this hardly seems to be implied in the inscription. Ebers, on the other hand, thinks that the present Birs Nimrud, if it really at all represent the Tower of Babel, is only the ruins of the first storey.[2] The multitudes of similar structures in Babylonia, and the distance of this

[1] Schrader's translation. *Keilinschriften*, p. 38.

The translation by Fox Talbot varies somewhat from this. It is as follows:—

The Temple of the Seven Planets, which is the Tower of Borsippa,
Which former kings had built and raised to the height of forty-two cubits,
But whose upper part, not having been finished by them,
Had rotted away from extreme old age.
The watersprings beneath it had not been kept in order:
The rain and the tempest had ruined its buildings:
The slabs that covered it had fallen off, and the bricks of its wall lay scattered in heaps.
The great Lord Merodach incited my heart to repair it.
Its site had not been disturbed: its platform had not been destroyed.
In a fortunate month and on a lucky day
I collected the finest of the bricks of its wall and of the slabs that covered it, and rebuilt the ruins firmly.
I placed inscriptions written in my name in the finest apartments,
And thus made an end of rebuilding the ruin and completing its upper part. *Records of the Past*, vol. vii. p. 76.

I omit much that does not bear on the repair of the Tower.

M. Oppert has collected all the notices of Birs Nimrud, and of the Tomb of Belus, from the classics, and also all the references to them in the cuneiform inscriptions, and seems to not a few to have proved beyond question that Birs Nimrud is indeed the Tower of Babel. See *La Bible et les Découvertes Modernes*, par L'Abbé Vigouroux, vol. i. p. 297.

[2] *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. ii. p. 250 *note*.

one from Babylon itself, seems to this great scholar to make the identification doubtful. However this may be, it is curious to find how estimates vary; for while Layard gives that of the mound at 198 feet, with an addition of 38 for the mass of brick-work at the top, Rawlinson speaks of it as only 153½ feet high, in all; which Schrader compares with the 168 feet he thinks he has obtained. The discrepancy of even Layard's figures, however, with those of Herodotus and Strabo, is extraordinary, nor is it easy to see how it can be explained, unless, indeed, the labours of Alexander's soldiers had lowered the vast mound by nearly two-thirds, or Ebers be right in his conjecture, that all that remains is only the wreck of the lowest storey.

Whether these gigantic erections belong to the period to which the eleventh chapter of Genesis refers, is of course a question, but they are at least as old as the earliest records of profane history.[1] It seems certain, moreover, even apart from the Bible, that a great empire, founded by one known ever since as Nimrod, absorbed the whole of West Asia, shattering the Turanian power, which till then had spread itself far and wide, and leaving its warlike memorials in the shape of towers, castles, and fortified cities. Assyria, in the mountainous north, may have been only an extension of this wide dominion, but, in any case, Nimrod was the Cæsar or Napoleon of the first races of men. It does not follow from this, however, that the conception of him in tradition as an arch-rebel against God is correct, nor that he was, as Josephus supposed, the prime mover in the building of the Tower of Babel.[2] The phrase used of him in

[1] Schrader, *Keilinschriften*, p. 35, thinks that Birs Nimrud is certainly "The Tower of Babel."

[2] *Ant.*, i. 4, 2.

Scripture seems one of commendation rather than blame; for to speak of him as "a mighty one," that is, a warrior hero, "on the earth," and as "a mighty hunter before Jehovah," shows that the bad name he has since held was not attached to him in the days of Moses; for "before Jehovah" is a phrase equivalent to "well pleasing" to Him, as is seen in many texts.[1]

The building and arrest of "The Tower of Babel," and the "confusion of tongues," are evidently connected with this glimpse of the first great military empire. Whether, as some have suggested, the phrase "the whole earth," in the 1st verse of the 11th chapter of Genesis, should be translated "the whole land," is a point on which the most orthodox may safely differ, for the word is sometimes used in the one sense and sometimes in the other, in Scripture; as we have already seen in connection with the Flood. The narrative carries us back to a period, we know not how remote, when the

[1] Gen. xvii. 1; xxiv. 40; xlviii. 15. Ps. xix. 14; cxvi. 9. *See* Gesenius' *Lexicon*, under the word Jehovah. Grivet quotes an Accadian liturgy, in which Merodach is called, "I am he who *walks before* Ea—I am the warrior, the eldest son of Ea—the messenger." Ea undoubtedly resembles Jah in sound, and the whole phrase is strikingly like the expressions respecting Nimrod in Genesis. The words translated in our version, "a mighty hunter," are rendered in the Septuagint, "a giant hunter;" in the Vulgate, "a valiant hunter"; in the Arabic, "a terrible giant;" in the Syriac, "a giant warrior;" and in the Chaldee, "a valiant man." "To walk before Jehovah" is the ideal of a godly life in Scripture. Can it be, asks M. Grivel, that the word "walk" has been lost from the Hebrew text in its reference to Nimrod? There is at least very little doubt that the great king was deified after his death, if not before it, for, apart from the meaning of Merodach, the constellation Orion bears in Arabic the name El Jabbar, "the giant." Orion is a mighty hunter even in Homer. *Odyss.*, xi. 572, 575.

population of Mesopotamia still spoke a common dialect: it may be as a result of the political relations established by Nimrod's empire. In the childlike language natural to a document which has reached us from the infancy of the world, we read that some of the races—now united under one sceptre—accustomed to build gigantic towers, in imitation of the distant mountains from which their forefathers had come, determined to found a city which should boast of a tower, reaching, in their simple conceptions, to heaven; hoping thus at once to attract the favour of the gods, and bind all the populations round to one grand religious centre.[1] A great catastrophe, however, brought about we know not how, not only stopped the undertaking, but led to the population being scattered "abroad" from the plain of Shinar, "upon the face of all the earth;" "confounding their language," so that they could not understand one another's speech. Can it be that in this narration we have the statement of the immediate cause of that dispersion of mankind from their original common home, which led to the divergence of human speech into the three great branches—the Turanian, the Semitic and the Aryan, to which it can even now be finally traced back? "Nothing," says Max Müller, "necessitates the admission of different beginnings for the formal elements of the Turanian, Semitic and Aryan branches of speech."[2]

[1] So the Israelites spoke of cities "Walled up to heaven," Deut. i. 28; and so Homer speaks of a pine tree reaching to heaven. *Odyss.*, v. 239.

[2] *Lectures on the Science of Language*, 1st series, p. 342. F. Delitzsch,—*Studien über indogermanische Wurzelverwandschaft*,—has collected a surprising number of roots common to Sanscrit and Hebrew. An example may suffice. The word *gahal* means means *to call*, in Hebrew, Assyrian and Aramaic. In the same

While these three great families of language are characterized by wide distinctions in form and structure, there is at the same time such an amount of similarity in the leading roots of all as would indicate something like a common origin. "It is possible even now," says Professor Müller, "to point out radicals which, under various changes and disguises, have been current in the three branches ever since their first separation."

"What could be more fitting," asks Bunsen, "than to recognise in this narrative, the account of the division of Central Asiatic mankind into those three great world-historical races, which form in themselves a unity, and to which we are now in a position to trace back all the peoples of Asia and Europe known to us by their speech? Research respecting these three races, the Turanians, the Semites, and the Aryans, leads us to a great common centre—the district bounded by the mountains of Central Asia—the Caucasus, Ararat and the Altai." [1]

Bunsen sees in the narration a hint of the providential breaking up of Nimrod's empire, and the subsequent dispersion of the population; resulting in such a formation of dialects and languages no longer understood except by the tribes in which they had sprung up, as happened at the dissolution of the Roman empire. Five or six idioms—the Italian, French, Spanish, Wallachian and Italian were then developed from the Latin, which had previously been common to all the countries in which these new forms of speech arose. This is ingenious, and does not exclude the direct action of God in the result; for His course is no less providential, whether

way *kaleo*, in Greek, means *to call*, and con*cil*ium, in Latin, means a body of people *called* together (p. 90).

[1] Bunsen's *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 76.

sudden, or working by the slow operation of natural laws. The growth of a tree in a hundred years is as truly Divine as if it grew in a night. In both cases God alone brought it about. "There is no reason," says an acute critic of bygone days, "why we should think the confusion of tongues the work of a moment; for details could not be given in so short a notice. Who does not see that the early days of the human race are here given with the utmost brevity, and that the annals of many years are crowded between a few commas? It is more likely that discord was first sent among men, and that from this cause, leaving the work unfinished, they scattered into neighbouring regions, and gradually wandered farther and farther off; and that their languages gradually changed as they were thus isolated over the face of the earth. The facts may have been brought succinctly together by Moses in his compendious narrative, but those interpreters surely err who think that they were carried out to completion by God almost as quickly as the verses themselves are read."[1]

An event so striking could not fail to perpetuate itself, more or less, in the traditions of the region, and, hence, it was only what might have been expected, when the early legends of Creation and the Flood were recovered from Assyria, that some reference should also be found to the Confusion of Tongues. Unfortunately, the tablets relating to it, which were brought to England by the lamented George Smith, are sadly mutilated, but even in their fragmentary state they are of great interest. So far as they are intelligible they run as follows:

"The thoughts of men's hearts were evil, so that the father of the gods turned from them. Babylon had corruptly turned to sin, and set about building a great

[1] Clerici, *Comment. in Genesin*, p. 105.

Tower. Small and great mingled at the task, raising the mound. This they did all the day, raising up their stronghold; but in the night the god Anu entirely made an end of it. In his anger, also, he poured out before the gods his secret counsel to scatter them abroad, and set his face against them, and for this end gave a command to make strange their speech, and thus hinder their progress. Numantir—the god of confusion—having gone down, they violently resisted him, but he cast them to the earth when they would not stop their work. They revolted against the gods, but sorely they wept for Babylon, and grieved very much (when their work was stopped and they were scattered abroad)."

Echoes of the same tradition have reached us from other sources also. A quotation by Eusebius, from Abydenus, a Greek historian, who lived about two hundred years before Christ, informs us that "The Assyrians relate that the first men, sprung from the earth, defiant in their strength and giant size, and despising the gods, in the belief that they themselves were their superiors, undertook to build a high tower on the spot where Babylon now stands. It had already almost reached heaven, when the winds, aiding the gods, threw down the huge mass on the heads of the builders; and from these ruins Babylon was built. And whereas men, till then, had all spoken the same language, henceforth, by the operation of the gods, they spoke in different languages."[2]

Nor is even Western Antiquity without a tradition of the same kind. Homer sings how "the two giants began to set Ossa on Olympus and Pelion on Ossa, that they might climb to heaven; and would have succeeded,

[1] Smith's *Chaldean Genesis*, pp. 160–162. Chad Boscawen, *Trans. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. pp. 304–311.

[2] Euseb., *Præparatio Evangelica*, ix. c. 14.

had they reached the age of manhood. But the Son of Jove destroyed them both before the hair had grown on their cheeks or the down on their chins." [1]

Even in the New World, indeed, there seems to have been a vivid remembrance in the ancient Indian races of such a stupendous event as Genesis records. A Mexican manuscript, in the Vatican library, relates that, "Before the great inundation which took place four thousand eight hundred years after the creation of the world, the country of Anahuac was inhabited by giants. All who did not perish in the flood were turned into fishes, except seven, who fled into caverns. When the waters subsided, one of the giants, surnamed the Architect, went to Cholula, where, as a memorial to the mountain Ilaloe, which had served as a refuge to himself and his six brethren, he built an artificial hill in the form of a pyramid. He ordered bricks to be made at the foot of the hills, and placed a file of men who passed them from hand to hand. But the gods beheld with wrath this building, the top of which was to reach the clouds, and irritated at such an attempt, hurled fire on the pyramid. Numbers of the workmen perished, the work was discontinued, and the portion built was dedicated to the god of the air." [2] We are further told, that at the time of the Spanish conquest, the ruins of this pyramid were still called "the mountain of unburnt brick." [3]

The Jewish traditions of the building of the Tower are so curious that they deserve to be given.

[1] *Odyss.*, xi. 315. The passage refers to two giant sons of Iphimedia and Neptune. Ovid repeats the fable, *Met.*, i. 151.

[2] Humboldt's *Researches*, vol. i. p. 96.

[3] *The Migration from Shinar*, by Captain G. Palmer, R.N., contains a great many interesting facts as to the early settlement of America.

"After the Flood," say the Rabbis, "men were afraid of another similar visitation, and forsook Palestine, the pleasant land, where Noah had last lived and sacrificed, and settled all together in one place, the plains of Shinar. There they no longer yielded themselves to the gentle guidance of godly Shem, the son of Noah, but cast away from themselves the kingdom of God, and did homage to Nimrod, the son of Cush, the son of Ham. For Nimrod was a man mighty in strength and in power. Born when his father was old, he was dearly loved by him, and received from him a gift of the robe with which God had first clothed Adam, when he had to leave Paradise. This robe had passed from Adam to Enoch, and from him to Methusaleh and to Noah, who took it with him in the ark. There it was stolen by Ham and given secretly by him to his son Cush. Nimrod, when clothed with it, was irresistible and invincible. The birds and beasts of the woods fell before him, and he conquered all his enemies easily. Thus he made himself king of Babylon, and extended his rule continually, till, by his cunning, he made men regard him as the lord of the whole earth, and persuaded them to look no longer to God, but to trust only to their own powers. Hence it was said that since the beginning of the world there was no one like Nimrod, terrible and mighty in destroying—by the chase and by his words—and sinful in the sight of God."

"The longer Nimrod sat on his throne, the prouder he became. Having failed to kill the babe Abraham, as he desired, he slew 70,000 children, in the hope that the dreaded child might be among them. He was full of forebodings that his empire would fall, and that a man should rise who would revive that of Him to whom alone all the glory and the majesty of earth rightly belong. To

prevent this, and to turn men wholly from God, he assembled his entire people, and said to them, 'Come, let us build a great city, and establish ourselves in it, that we may not be scattered over the whole earth, and drowned in a flood, as happened to our forefathers.' At that time the idea had got abroad that God intended to disperse men, the better to get them under His power. 'Let us raise in the midst of the city a tower so high that no flood could rise above it, so strong that no fire, should one break out, could destroy it. Yes, let us do still more, let us build it up into the heavens, and stay it on them, on all its four sides, that it be steady, and that the waters in the skies may not fall on us. Let us therefore raise the top up to heaven, and cleave the sky with axes, that its waters may run out, and never again bring us into danger, and, so, we will avenge the destruction of our forefathers. Thus we will fight the Ruler of heaven, whose power lies only in these waters, and we will hurl arrows and darts at him, and set an idol image on the top of the tower, with a sword in its hand, to fight the King of heaven for us. Thus shall we gain a great name, and rule over the whole world.'

"Though all were not so foolish as to think of conquering heaven, and driving God from His throne, yet they complied with Nimrod's wishes. Many saw in the tower a real safeguard against men being scattered, or drowned by a flood. Others believed the scheme would advance the idolatry they loved. Therefore 600,000 men, among whom were 1,000 princes, set to work to build the tower, and raised it till its top was seventy miles high. When stone failed they had to burn bricks and carry them up; to help them in which there were steps on the east side for those going to the top, and on the west for those coming down. But the height and breadth of the tower

were such that when the builders ran short of anything it was a year before they could get it. If a workman fell from the top it gave no one concern, but if a brick gave way, or fell over, it caused loud outcries and lamentations. The arrows which they shot off into the sky came back covered with blood, so that in their folly they shouted, 'See, we have killed all that is in heaven.'

"Abraham was forty-eight years old when he saw this tower, the wickedness and folly of which he at once felt so deeply, that he drew near and earnestly implored the builders to abandon the undertaking. But they laughed at him, and despised him as they would the stone lying on the earth. Then he raised his voice and cried to God, 'O Lord, confound and divide their speech, for I see only violence and hate in this city.' And the Lord called the seventy angels who are round His throne, and commanded them to confound the speech of the builders, so that they should no longer understand each other. Hence they had to give up building any more, and were divided into seventy peoples speaking as many different languages."

"The upper third of the tower was destroyed by fire, the lowest part overthrown by an earthquake, the middle only remaining."

If this strange medley of fancies be worth nothing more, it at least shows the kind of Biblical exposition in which the Rabbis delighted.

The hieroglyphics of Egypt add their testimony to the recital of Moses. "Egyptian traditions," says M. Chabas, "agree in a remarkable manner with the statements of Genesis. They attribute the dispersion of nations to a revolt of the wicked. In the texts of Edfou, published by Naville, we read that the good principle under the solar form of Harmachis, triumphed over its adversaries in the region south of the nome Apolliuopolites. Of those who

escaped the massacre, some emigrated to the south, and became the Cushites; others to the north and became the Amou; a third column, to the west, and became the Tamahou; and a fourth, to the east, and became the Shasou. In this enumeration the Cushites include the negroes. The Tamahou are the white race of the north of Africa, the isles of the Mediterranean, and Europe. Among the Amou figure all the great nations of Central and Eastern Asia—Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Chaldea, and Arabia, with the Bedouin of the desert and of 'the mountains of Asia.' Such was the Egyptian division of the great families of mankind."

"It may be noted that the red, yellow, black and white races were all, more or less, under the direction and protection of the gods of Egypt, and that a place was made for the whole in the lower heaven. . . . The Egyptians considered all foreigners as branches of a great stem of which they themselves were the chief offshoot. They believed, moreover, that when mankind dispersed, at a time veiled in the twilight of mythology, they already knew the metals, and writing; could erect great buildings, and possessed a social and religious organisation."[1]

The legend thus referred to seems to have been originally an Egyptian version of the story of the Flood. In it, as in Genesis, men are punished for a revolt against God, who exterminates all but a few. A sacrifice is however offered, and He promises never again to destroy the race in this way. But, as has been noticed, since a flood was the symbol and source of all prosperity and happiness, as associated in the Egyptian mind with the overflow of the Nile, they altered the tradition to suit their own ideas; and while causing men to perish by the direct action of the gods, substituted an inundation as a

[1] *Études sur l'Antiquité Historique*, pp. 97–100.

sign of their being appeased, in place of the rainbow of Noah.[1] Ra, the god by whom men were destroyed, began his reign, it may be added, before the firmament was set over the earth, so that the legend refers to the earliest times of the world.[2]

How many storeys of the Tower of Babel had been raised, when the work was suddenly stopped by Divine interference, is not told us in Genesis, but it appears certain that the seven to which Nebuchadnezzar carried it had not been reached. Seven was a sacred number of the Babylonians as well as of the Hebrews, and we may be sure that it was originally intended to raise it to that height, else it would not have been thought necessary to rebuild it on such a scale. From the form of other towers of which the ruins still remain, we may form some estimate of the condition in which this first one was left when so abruptly stopped. In the great tower-temple of Ur there were only three storeys, and in the bas relief at Kouyundjik, that of another city is represented with five. For these and others, in the larger cities of Babylon and Assyria,[3] the Tower of Babel, the oldest and most renowned, probably served as a model, and we may safely conclude that, if it had not been left unfinished, the sacred number seven would not have been departed from in others.[4]

[1] Naville. *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iv. pp. 1 ff. *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. p. 103. *See* p. 202.

[2] *Zeitschrift für Ægyptische Sprache* (1874), p. 57.

[3] Place, *Ninive et l'Assyrie*, vol. ii. p. 58.

[4] The Abbé Vigouroux derives the word Ziggurat, the Assyrian name for these towers, from Zakar, "to remember," "to keep in mind," so that it would mean "a memorial," "that which will preserve the name or memory." If this be right, it is in striking accordance with the words of Genesis, "Let us make us a name" ("mark," or "memorial"), ch. xi. 4. *Vigouroux*, vol. i. p. 311.

The derivation of the word Babel, in Genesis, from Balal, "to confound," has, as already said, latterly found less favour among philological students than that from Bab-El, the gate or temple of the god El.[1] But the spelling of names changes greatly in the course of time, and this change affects their apparent origin. Thus Bethlehem originally meant "house of bread," but its present Arabic form, Beit-lahm, means "house of flesh." Oppert, in a similar way, has shown that however apt the new etymology of Babel may be, as the word is now spelt; it originally meant, as the Bible tells us, simply "confusion." Still more, the form "Babel" itself is proved by him to be a distinctly Assyrian derivation, from Balal, "to confound;" while, if it had come through the Hebrew, it would have been "Bilbal," or "Bilbur," the actual Rabbinical word for "confusion."[2] In the same way "Borsippa" means "The tower of languages," though changed in later times to Bar Sab, "The shattered altar." Moreover, the character by which it is represented in the Assyrian tablets, means, strange to say, in the opinion of Oppert, "The city of the dispersion of the tribes."[3]

The Jewish tradition on pp. 286 ff. is from Beer, *Leben Abraham's*, pp. 7–9.

[1] A. Maury. *Revue des Deux Mondes* (March 15, 1868), p. 477. *See also, before*, p. 28.

[2] *Buxtorf*, 309.

[3] Oppert, *Journal Asiatique*, vol. x. p. 220; vol. ix. p. 503. Lenormant, *Langue Primitive de la Chaldée*, p. 355.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FIRST BEGINNINGS OF THE HEBREW NATION.

IN the genealogical table of the tenth chapter of Genesis, Heber, the founder of the Hebrew race, is classed among the sons of Shem, through Arphaxad, and along with Elam, Asshur, Lud, and Aram. In other words, the Hebrews are connected by common descent, with the people of Elymais or Elam on the Persian Gulf, east of the Tigris; with the Assyrians on the north-east of that river; with the people of Arphaxad, still farther north, among the mountains of Southern Armenia, immediately east of what is now the Lake Van; with the Lydians and the Semitic peoples of Asia Minor; and with the Aramean or Syrian nations stretching, thence, south-east, to the Euphrates.

The tie by which the Hebrews felt themselves thus linked to these widely separated nations could hardly have been their similarity of language: for the different tribes which bordered or settled in Palestine from the earliest ages, likewise spoke Semitic dialects, connected as closely as possible with the Hebrew; and yet they were never regarded as related to Israel. Nor did any special intimacy on their part with the chosen people account for the connection recognised, for from an early age the Jews were only a small tribe living far away in the remote south-west. It seems rather, as if a strong tradition

lingered among that race of a primitive connection with them, either political, or religious, or both; as if, in early ages, the five future nationalities had formed one common State in the east, before their ancient confederacy was dissolved. The war of the various eastern kings, mentioned in the fourteenth of Genesis, speaks of the likelihood of still earlier political revolutions in these regions; while the traditions of Nimrod's attempt to found a world empire, points, it may be, to the causes of wide national disruption.[1]

It is worthy of special remembrance in this connection, even at the risk of repetition, that though for the last fifty years all the peoples speaking a language related to the Hebrew have been called Semitic, the term is vague and indefinite. In antiquity only a part of these races were known by this name; and though such nations as the Phenicians, Philistines, and others, who spoke languages more or less identical with the Hebrew, may have originally had the same common home as Israel, in an unknown pre-historical period—they were no longer reckoned by the Hebrews in Palestine as related to them, but as wholly foreign. Israel, in fact, belonged to an entirely distinct division of the same original stock.[2]

The tribe to which Abraham, the great forefather of the Hebrews belonged, had its original seat in the district named from Arphaxad,[3] the head of the race, and hence known to the Greeks and Romans by the name of

[1] In connection with the traditions of a queen called Semiramis having founded Damascus and Askelon, it is curious to notice that Semiramis was used as a Jewish name, in the form Shemiramoth, (*masc.*) as far back as David's time. See 1 Chron. xv. 18, 20; xvi. 5.

[2] Ewald, *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 404.

[3] Gen. x. 22.

Arrapachitis. It lies north of Assyria in the mountains of Southern Armenia, straight south of the modern city of Kars and of Mount Ararat, and is a tangle of wild hills, rising often to great heights, but intersected by fruitful valleys.[1] The name Arphaxad, in itself, indeed, bears witness to the earliest nationality of the region, for it seems to mean "The stronghold of the Chaldeans."[2]

The name Hebrew, first given to Abraham[3] by the Canaanites, and then to his descendants, as those who had come from beyond the great river Euphrates,[4] is handed down as that given by Israel also, in the form of Heber, to the ancient founder of their race. But the first glimpse of tribal life appears in the migration of Terah, the father of Abraham, from his native mountains to the plains of Mesopotamia; though it may be that in the names of earlier generations we have some hints of their remoter movements and history. Thus, Peleg, "a dividing,"—Heber's son,—seems to point to the separation of the Arabian branch of Joktan from the future Hebrew stem;[5] Reu, "the friend," perhaps reminds us of Abraham's tender relation to Jehovah, though it may hint only at a maker of alliances among the hill tribes; Serug, still the name of a district a day's journey north of Harran, has the warlike sense of "the strong one"; Nahor seems to mean "the slayer"; Terah, "the wanderer"; and Haran, "the hill-man." What led Terah to emigrate with his tribe is not told us;

[1] *Dict. of Geog.*, art. Armenia, vol. i.

[2] *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 405.

[3] Gen. xiv. 13.

[4] From the Hebrew verb, "to cross over."

[5] Gen. x. 25. Mr. Cyril Graham thinks that Peleg, which also means a river or water-course, refers to the cutting of some of those canals which are found in such numbers between the Tigris and the Euphrates. *Cambridge Essays*, 1858.

possibly it was the same fierce pressure of tribes advancing from beyond, which commonly led to such movements; or perhaps it was a desire to share the rich pasture of the lowlands. His family consisted of three sons, and one daughter, Sarah, the future wife of her half-brother Abraham; for though the children of different mothers they had a common father. One son, Haran, died in "Ur of the Chaldees," "the land of his nativity," leaving as his descendant, Lot, "a veil" or "covering," who afterwards passed on to Canaan with Abraham. Nahor, the second son, stopped on the way, at Harran, and became the grandfather of Laban, "the white Syrian," and Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau. Milcah, "the counsellor," a daughter of Haran, and wife of Terah's son Nahor,—and Sarah, first called Sarai, "the princely one," then Sarah, "the princess;"[1] with Iscah, "she looks abroad," another daughter of Haran not mentioned elsewhere, made up the aggregate heads of the tribe.

There has been no little dispute as to the locality of "Ur of the Chaldees," spoken of as the native land of Haran.[2] The name Uru has been found on tablets dug from the ruins now known as El Mugheir, to the south of Babylon and east of the Euphrates,[3] and this is apparently beyond question the region; for apart from the testimony of the ruins themselves, it was still known as "the place of the Chaldees" shortly before the Christian era.[4] It has, indeed, been thought by many that it lay

[1] Fürst makes Sarai mean "Jehovah is Lord."

[2] Gen. xi. 28, 31.

[3] Schrader, *Keilinschriften* p. 42. See also Oppert's proofs in the *Jour. of Roy. Asiatic Soc.*, vol. xv. (1855), pp. 260–276.

[4] Eupolemus, a Greek writer, quoted by Eusebius. *Præp. Evang.*, ix. 17.

in the north, but the identification of the city with Edessa[1] and other places entirely fails. It seems probable that Ur became the name of a district as well as of a city, for the Greek Bible translates it "the country of the Chaldeans": a name given, apparently in later times, when the race thus known migrated thither from the same mountainous north as had been the cradle of the Hebrews.[2]

The ruins of Mugheir rise on the west side of the Euphrates, in a vast mound so strewn with remains of bricks cemented by bitumen that the present name, which means "the town of asphalte or bitumen," has been given it from the fact. The plain around is so flat and low that when the stream swells each year, the whole region becomes a lake, with Mugheir rising in its midst, approachable only by a boat.[3] But it was very different 4,000 years ago. The city was then flourishing; the arts and sciences were cultivated; astronomers watched the heavens; poets composed hymns and epics, and patient scribes stamped, on soft clay tablets, the books which have in part come down to our day. For the ancient race which lived in these lands were, beyond most, given to writing and reading. There were libraries at Senkereh, Babylon, Borsippa, Cutha, Accad, Ur, Erech, Larsa, Nippur, Kalah Chergat, Calah, and Nineveh.[4] The waters of the Euphrates, moreover,—"the life of the land,"—did not then flood the country, but spread in a

[1] Dean Stanley thinks Edessa was Ur, and gives a picturesque description of it as such. *Jewish History*, vol. i. p. 7.

Prof. Sayce and George Smith also regard Mugheir as Ur, *Hist. of Babylonia*, p. 65.

[2] *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 406; *Dillmann*, p. 224.

[3] *Journ. Royal Asiat. Soc.* (1855), vol. xv. pp. 260–276.

[4] *Vigouroux*, vol. i. p. 160.

network of sparkling canals and rivulets which carried fertility to the whole landscape.

Ur was one of the most ancient cities of Chaldea, and at the time of Abraham must have been one of the most splendid. The Cushite population on the Lower Tigris and Euphrates had already conquered the Accadians, and were mingled with them; to form in the course of time the race known as Babylonians. Large numbers of bricks stamped with characters more or less undecipherable from their rude simplicity, fortunately reveal the names of the earliest kings, who seem to have shared power in these southern regions with several other local rulers; and of these, two,—known provisionally as Urukh and his son Dungi, who would seem to have lived before Abraham's time,[1]—appear as the first known "Kings of Ur."

The power of Urukh had originally extended over only the district round Ur, but had gradually absorbed most of Babylonia: no doubt as the result of fierce wars. A long and prosperous life had followed, marked by monuments more numerous than those of any other king except Nebuchadnezzar. Thus, at Ur itself, he had built at least three sacred structures of great size, besides a temple tower to the moon, on a platform of brick about twenty feet high, from which it rose in we do not know how many storeys; each, like those of Birs Nimrud, smaller than the one below. Abraham would daily see, in the northern part of the city, its huge height rising from the basement in a long square of 198 feet by 133 in the lower storey, and 120 feet by 75 in the second, which is all that can now be traced: for time has utterly ruined it, in spite of its enormous strength. It was still unfinished

[1] Rawlinson (Prof.), however, assigns his date to the lifetime of Terah.

when Urukh died; for clay cylinders found in the upper storey show that later Babylonian kings contributed to its completion. But Urukh's prisoners of war and slaves must have toiled hard to raise even the part of it he constructed, for it is cased with ten feet thick of burnt bricks, enclosing a dense mass of others only sun-dried; bitumen, the mortar of those regions, binding the vast aggregate into a stony firmness.[1] A sacred observatory tower rose over the highest storey, and there, if it were finished before his day, the patriarch would see the watchers of the heavens—the oldest astronomers in the world—ever busy gathering what they believed to be the intimations of the stars; for the guidance of the king and people, in their public, private, and social life.[2] Numerous priests in flowing, embroidered robes, chanted their liturgies, offered sacrifice, drew omens, marched in long processions on their religious festivals, and presided in the temple bounds over courts of justice; while in the city were found all the trades and professions which such a development of worship implies.

But Ur was not the only city which King Urukh embellished. The ruins of a temple tower built by him at Warka, with its corners exactly facing the four cardinal points, still rise a hundred feet above the plain; and so huge was the whole structure that more than 30,000,000 bricks must have been used in its construction.[3] Others of the same character; a succession of receding towers

[1] Smith and Sayce's *Babylonia*, p. 69.

[2] Observations of eclipses commenced at Babylon B.C. 2228,—1,983 years before the capture of the city by Alexander the Great. Lieut. Conder, R.E., *Bible Handbook*, p. 18.

[3] Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 199. *Vigouroux*, vol. i. p. 352.

standing one on another, with an observatory above all, had been built by him in other cities also, and doubtless stood in all their glory in the time of Abraham. In all, the position was exactly that of the Tower at Warka. The style is primitive and simple, the bricks of many sizes and badly fitted together, with mud as cement for the sun-dried, and bitumen for that of the burnt; the walls sloped inwards to make them stronger, with arched drains underneath them to secure dryness. In each city the tower was dedicated to the local god; whether the sun or the moon, or one of the planets; or to Sarili, the king of the gods. Two dedication tablets of that of Ur, fortunately, still remain. "Urukh, king of Ur, built the temple of the god Sin (the moon);" and "Urukh, king of Ur, raised a temple to the god Sin, his lord, and also built the fortified wall of Ur." The moon was, indeed, the great god of the city; its splendour in the dark eastern skies, and its importance in astronomical studies, giving it a rank even above that of the sun in this district as in some others.[1] Nor were his temples the only architectural glories of Urukh's reign. A great palace at Ur, known as that of the "supreme prince," further confirmed his claims as one of the great builders of the ancient world. The very extent of the city attests its splendour and that of its ruler, for even its remaining ruins measure four-fifths of a milè across, while its wall, still traceable, is over four miles in circumference.

If the earliest dwellings in Chaldea were simple huts of branches; in the days of Abraham[2] these had been

[1] It was from its worship of the moon that Ur got the name of Kamarina in later times, from *Arab.* Kamar, "the moon." The sun was regarded as only a goddess, or as the son of the moon; which, on the other hand, was a god.

[2] It is curious to find that the name Abram was one in use

superseded by solid houses of brick; the alluvial soil yielding exhaustless supplies of clay for every kind of structure. The houses, with fanciful designs painted outside, like the temple towers, stood on platforms. To shut out the heat, the walls of the better class were very thick. The windows were high up and small; the rooms long, narrow, and gloomy, and all opened one into the other; while a central arch formed the entry from without. Trees planted all round served to protect the inmates from the overpowering rays of the sun.[1] Whether Terah and Abraham lived in houses, however, or pitched their tents, as is still done by Arabs, outside the city gate, is a matter of question. Mugheir appears to have been abandoned about B.C. 500; but it and Erech continued to be what they had been from the earliest times, great sacred burial cities, like Abydos in ancient Egypt. The dead were interred with great care and devotion in vast sepulchral mounds, which were thoroughly drained; the body being commonly laid on its left side, with a copper bowl with some dates or other food in its hand; the right one being laid over the bowl as if the departed were eating. The seal, in the shape of a cylinder, worn in life on the wrist, was left there, and cups for drinking, generally of bronze, were placed near.[2]

The arts of life surrounded the patriarch in this region to an extent we could hardly have anticipated.[3] Hand-

among the Assyrians. It occurs as that of an officer of the court of Esarhaddon, B.C. 681–668.

[1] Described from the Assyrian slabs.

[2] H. G. Tomkins' *Studies on the Life of Abraham.* (Bagster: London, 1879.)

[3] The excavations conducted at Niffer (Nipur), Warka, Mugheir, and elsewhere have revealed a new form of speech resembling the Turanian family of languages, but with a vocabulary which is "decidedly Cushite or Ethiopian;" approaching in fact

made pottery of many kinds abounded; if, indeed, the potter's wheel were not already plied so dexterously as it is to-day, to create the many shapes of jars, and vessels, and lamps which are yet found in the old Chaldean graves. Clay tablets stamped with figures and groups of men and animals, displayed the simple skill of the artist, and the stone engraver carved designs of human or divine forms on cylinders of serpentine, jasper, and other stones; to be used for impressing the device on soft clay tablets by rolling it over them. A fine cylindrical seal of the age of King Urukh, recovered by Ker Porter, but subsequently lost, has been copied in various books.[1] A royal personage sits in an armchair, the hind legs of which are carved into the form of deer's legs. He is dressed in a long robe with sleeves, reaching to his ancles, and a hat like many of the felt ones of to-day, while three figures before him, apparently female, have long, flounced, embroidered, and striped dresses, marking a great advancement in textile manufactures. Nor is this so strange, when we remember that, already in Joshua's day, a Babylonish garment kindled the greed of Achan.[2] Fragments of linen are said to have occurred in the tombs, and the head, in some of them, has been found resting on the remains of a "tasselled cushion of tapestry." Nor were other arts unknown. Sun dials marked the hours of the day, which had already been divided as we now have them; and though stone tools and weapons were still in use, the smith and the jeweller

the Mahra of Southern Arabia, and the Galla of Abyssinia. Thus modern research more and more confirms the statements of the Bible. See Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 65.

[1] For example, in Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 118.

[2] Josh. vii. 21.

furnished the field, the camp, the house, and the person with a long list of implements, weapons, and ornaments in various metals.

The plain of Mugheir, though now desolate and marshy, was once wondrously fertile. Created by the alluvial deposits of the Euphrates, it rivalled the productiveness of Egypt, watered by the Nile; insomuch that Sir Henry Rawlinson has thought it the site of the garden of Eden. The ruins of Ur lie more than two degrees north of the Persian Gulf, but in Abraham's time the sea extended much farther in that direction than at present; the vast deposits of the Tigris and Euphrates adding new land to their delta, according to those best fitted to judge, at so rapid a rate, that a tract of country not less than a hundred and thirty miles from north to south, and from sixty to seventy broad, has been gained from the sea, for the most part since the patriarch's day;[1] Ur, and even Babylon, being then ports from which ships traded far and near.

From the month of May to November it seldom rains in Chaldea, and the soil is scorched by the burning sun. The Tigris reaches its highest floods about the time when the rains cease, in May; beginning to rise in March and sinking rapidly in the end of May, till it reaches its lowest in June. The rise of the Euphrates, drawn from the northern slopes of the mountains of Armenia, begins a fortnight later, but lasts longer; overflowing the banks far and near, and sometimes causing great disasters. In the time of Abraham, however, the waters were utilized, and danger prevented, by the system of canals, river dykes, and sluices, in use; which enabled the

[1] Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 6. The growth of the land was formerly, according to some, a mile in 30 years; now it is a mile in about 66. *Vigouroux*, vol. i. p. 334. *See before*, p. 115.

inhabitants to regulate the inundation as they pleased. Channels of greater or less size, skilfully formed, led the quickening moisture to the roots of every tree or plant. Freely expended when the leaves and flowers were yet to form, they were less so when the fruit had set, while very little was given where it had reached its full size, and only wanted ripening.[1]

It is hard to realize, from the marshy flats of the south, or the dry dusty stretches of the north of Chaldea, what the country must have been when the innumerable canals, once the boastful glory of ancient monarchs, but now dry and well nigh effaced, distributed far and near the waters of the great river. Mr. Loftus, however, gives us a glimpse of its appearance when the waters have begun to fill what irrigating channels still remain; and thus helps to revivify the distant past. "Nothing," says he, "could exceed the beauty and luxury of the river side and its now verdant borders. Bee-eaters, kingfishers, herons, pigeons, hawks, and other birds, in all their bright and varied plumage, were flying about, uttering their several cries and scarcely deigning to notice the presence of human beings." Elsewhere he speaks of a thick forest of luxuriant date trees fringing the bank on each side of the river, which supplies the necessary moisture for their nourishment, and for the cultivation of cereals, which flourish even under the shade of the palms. The ebb and flow of the tide is perceptible twenty miles above Korna; quite eighty miles from the Persian Gulf.[2]

Chaldea produced neither the fig, the olive, nor the vine, but it had a treasure in the palm which made up for their absence. The most beautiful of trees, it is also the most varied in usefulness. Its fruit, hanging in clusters

[1] Allen, *Abraham, his Life, Times, etc.*, p. 3.

[2] *Chaldea and Susiana*, p. 275.

of amber or gold, is at once pleasant to the eye, delicious, and nourishing,—the food of the poor and the luxury of the rich. The very kernels, when broken up, feed the goats. An incision in the stem yields a drink which takes the place of wine. The crown which grows from the top, and the inner fibres and pith are boiled for food. Mats and baskets are made from the leaves, while the stem furnishes pillars, roofing, and furniture. In Abraham's day it grew almost in forests, in Chaldea.[1] The whole district indeed was amazingly fertile and highly cultivated. Shady with palms, tamarisks, and acacias, it was also rich in pomegranates, and golden with fields of the finest wheat. Millet and sesame grew to a fabulous height, and all kinds of corn plants produced two or even three hundred fold.[2] Such was the enchanted land which Abraham, at the summons of God, was to exchange for the land of Canaan.

The life of Abraham in Chaldea seems to have been nearly, if not actually, contemporary with a great religious revolution which Sargon I., the founder of a new dynasty, effected throughout all Babylonia. Till then the mingled Sumirs and Accadians had followed a simple and primitive nature worship, different in each town or district; and had not as yet grouped their local divinities into any graduated celestial hierarchy. Their religion, indeed, consisted chiefly in meagre rites; their ideas of the gods were vague and indefinite. But, if M. Lenormant be right in his date,[3] Sargon, about 2,000 years before Christ, gave a great impulse to idolatry by establishing over all Mesopotamia a complete and developed system; introduced it may be by Nimrod as the first

[1] Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. pp. 43, 44.
[2] *Herod.*, i. 193; *Strabo*, xvi. i. 14; Plin. *Hist. Nat.*, xviii. 17.
[3] Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 114.

Cushite monarch, and favoured by king Urukh, but only gradually perfected after many generations, in priestly schools. Two thousand years before the Christian era, says George Smith, the mythology was already completed, and its deities definitely connected into a system which remained with little change down to the close of the kingdom.[1]

As in India the old Vedic religion was supplanted by the teachings of the Brahminical schools, and countless gods took the place of the earlier simple religion; so, on the banks of the Euphrates, new divinities, introduced by the religious theorists and philosophers of that distant age, displaced for ever the faith of earlier times. Was this the immediate cause of Abraham being divinely "called" to leave a country now wholly given to idols, and destined to sink thenceforward into ever deeper religious error? It was from his day that we must date the rise of Babylon to be, what it remained for many centuries, the spiritual centre of Western Asia,[2] as Rome was of medieval Christendom. The old Accadian religious elements were henceforth to blend with the Semitic, introduced by the Cushite conquest, and these, gradually gaining predominance, were to form an elaborate and powerful system of idolatry: nor could

[1] *Chaldean Genesis*, p. 52.

[2] See Tiele, *Die Assyriologie*, p. 23. Professor Sayce, *Trans. Soc. of Bib. Arch.*, vol. iii. pp. 145 ff. M. Lenormant is of opinion that "it is plain that the full development of astro-theology cannot have been much earlier than B.C. 2000," but he places the reign of Sargon in the 16th century B.C. The religious revolution in Babylonia would thus still be contemporary with Abraham, though not brought about by Sargon. In another paper of Professor Sayce (*Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch*, vol. iv., p. 26), I find he assigns Sargon to a date from B.C. 2000 to B.C. 1700.

Abraham and his descendants have founded a pure religion in such an atmosphere.

It is intensely interesting to look back to these glimpses of the rise of great religious systems in extreme antiquity. Strange to say, some of the very hymns which marked the growing development of Chaldean idolatry remain to our day; hymns which Abraham may often have heard rising in measured chant and antiphony from priestly choirs at Ur. One addressed to the moon, extols it as the "Lord, the prince of gods of heaven and earth;" the "Father-god, enlightening the earth;" the "good god;" "the god of the month;" "the Lord of the alabaster house;" "the Lord of crowns;" "the Lord, duly returning;" "the awarder of kingdoms;" "who raises himself by humbling the proud;" "the crescent, mighty-horned;" "the doom-dealer, shining with rounded orb;" "the self-produced, issuing from his home, and pouring forth ever plenteous brightness;" "the high exalted, all producing;" "the Father, who in his circuit renews life in all lands;" "the Lord, whose godhead spreads awe of him, far and wide as sea and sky;" "the guardian of shrines in the land of Accad;" "the sire of gods and men, the guide of childhood;" "the primeval seer, the sole rewarder, fixing the doom of distant days;" "the unshaken chief, whose gracious heart is ever forgetful of its wrongs;" "whose blessings, ever flowing, never cease;" "the leader of the gods, who, from depth to height, bright piercing, opens the gate of heaven."

It continues:—

Father mine, of life the giver, cherishing, beholding all!
Lord, whose power benign extends over all in heaven and earth!
Thou drawest forth from heaven the seasons and the rains;
Thou watchest life and yieldest showers!
Who in heaven is high exalted? Thou, sublime is thy reign!

Who, on earth? Thou, sublime is thy reign!
Thou revealest thy will in heaven, and celestial spirits praise thee,
Thou revealest thy will below, and subduest the spirits of earth,
Thy will shines in heaven like the radiant light;
On earth thy deeds declare it to me.
Thou, thy will, who knoweth? With what can man compare it?
Lord! in heaven and earth, thou Lord of gods, none equals thee.[1]

Idolatry was, indeed, striking its roots deep and wide. Ea, the special benefactor of men, was also the patron of irrigation; so vitally needed in those regions. Sin, the moon, of brickmaking and building; San or Shamas, the sun god, of war; Nergal, of hunting; and other deities presided over life in other aspects. The planets and the constellations were consecrated to gods, or rather, regarded as Divine; primitive astronomy measured days and months, and years and cycles, and recorded all the movements and appearances of the heavens, to fix the holy seasons and to read the story of the gods; and astrology drew auguries of good and evil from the phenomena thus observed, to guide men in every detail of their public, private. and social life. Magic and divination, moreover, had their special seat on the Euphrates; and magician priests claimed to avert, by countless spells and incantations, the malignity of innumerable genii and evil spirits which filled the air, the earth, and the abyss below it.

Abraham grew up amidst all this idolatry and superstition. But, to use a figure from the Institutes of Menu, his soul remained pure as a white lily in muddy waters amidst the seductive influences which won over even Terah, his father. In a household which "served other

[1] Lenormant, *Les Prem. Civilisations*, vol. ii. p. 158.

gods"[1] than Jehovah, he remained, from the first, true to the better faith, perhaps brought by his race, long before, from their native mountains in the north. The strength of character, the high religious feeling and the firm courage which this implied, attest a moral greatness of nature. For, wherever he turned, idolatry invited him. In the rising sun he saw a god worshipped by the people of Larsa and Sippara as their defender, and, as in Egypt, bearing different names at morning, noon, and evening. Terah would tell him that it rose as Oud, the sun of life, the foe of demons and sorcerers, and sank as Nindar, into the lower world, to light up the dark realms of death and of the dead. The Maskim, mighty demons who lived in the hollow of the earth, were its giant guardians,[2] receiving it as it entered. Mercury, the star of the god Nebo, was "prince of the men of Harran," the district where Terah was to live in his later years, and where he died. The planet Jupiter was the star of Merodach, the patron god of Babylon.[3] The five planets were the interpreters of the will of God, and as such were so closely watched, that the library of King Sargon had a special treatise on all the phases of Mars. The very sign for a divinity in Accadian was a star. Twelve chiefs of the gods presided in turn over each month and each sign of the Zodiac, assisted by thirty stars as "counsellor gods;" fifteen above and fifteen below the earth.[4]

Despite all this idolatry there still, however, lingered some traditions of earlier and better days. Legends passed from lip to lip—of the Creation; of the revolt of the evil spirits; of the innocence, temptation, and fall of

[1] Josh. xxiv. 2.
[2] Lenormant, *Magie*, p. 26.
[3] Prof. Sayce. *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iii. p. 175.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 148.

man; of the Deluge, and the deliverance of Noah and his family; of the Tower of Babel and the Confusion of Tongues. They were cherished, however, not by the old Accadians, but rather in the Cushite or Semitic stock; these two names as yet implying the same people. The prevailing idolatry was a development of the old religion of the Accadians, but for this development and for the traditions we are indebted to their conquerors.

Sacred usages, originally of Divine origin, but sadly corrupted in Abraham's day, also survived. The summit of all the mighty tower temples with which the country abounded, had their altars, on which sacrifices were offered to the gods, in the belief that they would come down only to such lofty sanctuaries; an idea natural to a people still clinging to their tradition that the seat of the immortals was on "the Mountain of the East," "or the Mountain of the World," from whose foot their ancestors had come. The ram and the bull were day by day slain and burnt to propitiate the gods. Nor was this the worst, for the Semitic race had learned from the Accadians,[1] the awful practice of human sacrifice,—households, in time of special trouble, even presenting their eldest son as a burnt offering for the sins of the family. But amidst all this fearful degeneracy of religious ideas, the patriarch would hear the seventh day spoken of as "the day of rest for the heart," on which even the king dared not ride out in his chariot, or eat forbidden meats, or violate a long list of minute restrictions.[2]

With all this excessive religiousness in the outward form, there was, however, as little conception of the essence of true religion as in later heathen nations; for the old Accadian writings seem to know no other sin

[1] Sayce, *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iv. p. 26.

[2] Fox Talbot, *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. p. 427.

than such neglect of the approved propitiatory rites; as seeking the favour of evil spirits by unholy arts, instead of winning over the good spirits by the authorised formulæ duly performed by priestly magicians.[1] The immortality of the soul was, however, universally held, for the tablets speak of its flying up like a bird to heaven, and we still have prayers for the dying, that the "Sun, greatest of the gods, may receive the saved soul into his holy hands."[2] There is, moreover, among the inscriptions, a fine one, not yet fully translated, describing the soul in heaven, "the land of the Silver Light," clothed in white shining garments, seated in the company of the blessed and fed by the gods themselves, with celestial food. So correctly had this great truth of the first religion been preserved to those times. The belief in demoniacal possession was universal, and indeed all diseases and personal calamities were attributed to it. Every one wore charms and talismans to guard him against evil influences ever hovering round; and, as in our own day, holy water was in vogue as a further means of driving them away.[3] The resurrection of the dead was also an article of the public creed, for Marduk or Merodach is addressed as "He who raises the dead to life."[4] After death the sun was "the Judge of Men." Like the Egyptians, the people among whom Abraham sojourned believed that the actions of men would hereafter be weighed in a balance—the good deeds against the bad—and sentence pronounced accordingly.[5] Still more, there lingered beneath the surface of the gross polytheism in vogue, the remembrance, how-

[1] Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 139.
[2] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. p. 30.
[3] *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 50.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 30.
[5] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 32.

ever faint, of the supreme pristine truth of the Unity of God, though sadly obscured to the multitude by the pantheism and idolatry which had gradually confounded the Creator with His creation, and degraded the Godhead into multitudinous deities displaying their presence in the phenomena of nature.[1]

To have kept true to the lofty faith with which he is identified, amidst such communities, and in spite of the apostasy of his father's house; to have turned aside from all that was degraded, superstitious, or false in the popular beliefs around him, while singling out and cherishing all that was divine and pure, implies in Abraham a grandeur of soul, and an instinctive perception of the true and eternal, which place him in the foreground of human greatness. Yet it cannot fully explain so unique a phenomenon to ascribe to him any powers or qualities however lofty; there must have been, besides, as Scripture affirms—a direct revelation and heavenly guidance. Even a writer so calm and unprejudiced as Max Müller can account for it in no other way.[2]

[1] Lenormant, *Histoire Ancienne*, vol. i. p. 452.
[2] *See* p. 23.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE MIGRATION OF ABRAHAM.

THE fusion of the simple Accadian nature-worship with the Cushite or Semitic astro-theology was an event of the first importance, not only for the age in which it took place, but for the whole future history of the world. Henceforward, idolatry rapidly developed itself, and boasted a long hierarchy of gods, an established caste of priests, a minutely prescribed ritual, and the authority of recognised position. Everything points, as has been said, to its having culminated about the time of Abraham's sojourn in Mesopotamia, and the constant tendency of his descendants in after ages to revert to it, shows the influence it already had on his people, before he migrated to Canaan.[1]

The spirit of idolatry, moreover, especially in its first vigour, has always been persecuting, and it is easy to believe that the legends of Abraham having suffered for his resolute worship of the One God, may embody the truth.

Jewish tradition, indeed, represents the patriarch as

[1] Mr. St. Chad Boscawen agrees with Prof. Sayce, that Sargon's reign was about B.C. 2000. *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. vi. p. 536. It is a curious fact that, notwithstanding their forefathers leaving the Euphrates so many ages before, the Jews to the last retained their fondness for Asiatic idolatry.

faithful to Jehovah even from childhood. One beautiful story describes him, fancifully enough, as having lived in early boyhood in a cave, and as coming out only after he was a growing lad. "When he first left it," says the legend, "Looking up at the heavens over him, and round upon the earth, he began to think, 'Who could have created all this?' Presently, the sun rose in splendour, and he thought this must be the Maker of the universe, and threw himself down before it and worshipped the whole day. But when evening came the sun sank, and Abraham now thought, this could not be the Creator of all. Then the moon rose in the east, and the countless army of the stars came forth. 'Surely the moon is the Lord of all, and the stars are the host of his servants,' cried Abraham, and bowed himself before the moon and worshipped it. But the moon went down, the light of the stars faded, and the sun appeared again on the edge of the sky. Then he said, 'Truly all these heavenly bodies together could not have created the universe; they listen to the voice of an Unseen Ruler, to whom all owes its being; Him alone will I henceforward worship; before Him only will I henceforth bow.'"[1]

The legend goes on to tell us that in those days idolatry spread widely. Nimrod and his people, and Terah and his whole house, worshipped images of wood and stone. Terah, indeed, had not only twelve idols, according to the twelve months, to whom in succession he offered sacrifices, but also made idols and sold them. But Abraham, now fifty years old, returning to his father's house, was sore distressed at this false worship, and set himself to show its folly and worthlessness, that he might teach his father a better way.

When, now, one day, Terah had been from home, and

[1] Beer's *Leben Abraham*, p. 3.

had trusted Abraham to sell the idols, the patriarch resolved to delay no longer carrying out his purpose. He therefore asked each buyer his age, and when told, asked him again, if at his time of life he were not ashamed to pray to the work of men's hands. One buyer having said that he was seventy, Abraham asked him, If he really meant to worship the idol? "Of course," answered the buyer, "he is my god." "Indeed," replied Abraham, "then you are older than your god; you are seventy, and this god was made yesterday." One day a woman came with a dish full of fine meal, and asked that it be set before the gods. As soon as she had gone, Abraham took a stick and broke in pieces all the gods except the largest, in whose hands he put the stick. But when his father came back and saw his idols destroyed, he asked who had done this? "Why should I deny it," replied Abraham; "a woman brought a dish full of fine flour and asked me to set it before the gods. But hardly had I done so before each wanted it, and hearing them clamouring thus for it, the biggest of them took a stick and broke the rest in pieces." "How can you mock me?" retorted Terah. "Have idols reason?" Then Abraham answered, "Do not your ears hear what your mouth speaks?" But Terah, infuriated at him, took him to Nimrod, that he might be punished. "If you will not worship the gods of your father," said the king, "then worship fire." "Why not water," replied Abraham, "which puts out fire?" "Well then, worship water." "Why not, rather, the clouds which hold the water?" "Very well, worship the clouds as well." "But why not, rather, the wind which blows the clouds away?" "Well, worship the wind." "Why not, rather, men, who can resist the wind?" But now Nimrod lost patience, and told him that he spoke only folly. Fire

was *his* god, and he would throw him into it—"and," added he, "may *your* God come and save you from it."

The legend goes on to say that Abraham was forthwith bound on a huge pile of wood, but the flames were suddenly extinguished by a fountain which sprang up from beneath; the wood changed into blossoming fruit trees, a delightful garden grew around, and angels were seen sitting in it with Abraham in their midst.[1]

The scene of this legend is said to have been Edessa, the present Oorfa, a town lying at the foot of one of the bare rugged spurs of the Armenian mountains, in the district called Padan-Aram—the "plains of Aram" or Syria.[2] A high crested crag, the natural fortification of the present citadel, doubly defended by a trench of immense depth, cut out of the living rock behind it, is a striking feature of the city. Another is, an abundant spring issuing in a pool of transparent clearness, and embosomed in a mass of luxuriant verdure, which, amidst the dull brown desert all around, makes, and must always have made, this spot an oasis, a paradise, in the Chaldean wilderness. Round this sacred pool, "The beautiful spring,"—"Callirhoe,"—as it was called by the Greek writers, gather the modern traditions of the patriarch. Hard by, amidst its cypresses, is the mosque, on the spot where he is said to have offered his first prayer; the cool spring itself was the one that burst forth in the midst of the fiery furnace which the infidels had kindled to burn him; its sacred fish, swarming by thousands and thousands, from their long-continued preservation, are cherished by the faithful as under his special patronage, and two Corinthian pillars which stand on the crag are

[1] Beer's *Leben Abraham*, pp. 16–21.

[2] Aram means "the Highlands."

said to commemorate his deliverance.[1] Nor is it at all certain that these legends have not a centre of historical truth, for the expression of Isaiah[2] that "God had redeemed Abraham," or "delivered him from death," seems to imply lifelong danger in his earlier career, danger from which his removal to Canaan, in the providence of God, delivered him.

It was not at Edessa, however, but at Harran, the Carrhæ of the Greeks and Romans, famous as the scene of the defeat of Crassus by the Parthians,[3] that Terah and his tribe settled, and Abraham spent the last years of his Mesopotamian life. This pastoral region was to become so distinctively the home of that portion of the race which remained on the far side of the Euphrates, that it became known as the "town of Nahor,"[4] and is frequently mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions as Aramaic or Syrian—which the nationality of Terah's descendants implies.

A vast limestone plateau, seamed by deep ravines, extends east and north-east of Oorfa, but sinks into an alluvial plain to the south. On the slope of a low hill in the midst of this lies Harran, looking out over a wide and richly fertile level, of more than twenty square miles in extent. A circle of low volcanic hills shuts in the view and marks the character of the landscape towards the Euphrates. Small brooks appear after rains, but they soon disappear, and leave the open expanse to the fierce heat of the sun, which ere long justifies the immemorial name, Harran, "the scorched," or "dried up."[5]

[1] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 7.

[2] Isa. xxix. 22.

[3] Plutarch, *Vit. Crass.*, 25, 27, 28.

[4] Gen. xxiv. 10.

[5] Professor Sayce, however, explains the name from the Accadian as meaning "road." *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. i. p. 303

In winter the temperature is low, but in summer the heat is intolerable, especially when the wind blows from the Southern Arabian desert. October and November see all traces of vegetation burnt up, except on the edge of any trickle of water, but as soon as rain falls, all nature revives, though only to be speedily withered by the winter winds. Spring alone covers the soil with a comparatively more abiding carpet of grass, varied by countless flowers of every colour, and offering every attraction of form and height. [1]

In the town itself, the ruins of an ancient stronghold, built of large blocks of basalt, still attest the military importance of the position. Nor was it less favourably placed for commerce. Four roads passed through it from the earliest times: to Assyria, on the east; to Babylon and the Persian Gulf on the south-east; towards Asia Minor on the north, and to Syria on the south-west,[2] and these must have brought Abraham into contact with caravans and travellers from all parts of the East and West. They were, moreover, the lines along which armies marched in the constant wars of these ages, and hence, Abraham had very likely seen, while still in Harran, the levies of Elam, Larsa, Shinar, and Northern Mesopotamia; with which, under Chedorlaomer, he was to come into hostile contact thirteen years later, in Palestine.

At the foot of the slope which is crowned by the ruins of the fortress, are nestled the beehive-shaped huts of the Bedouin population, who thus, like the inhabitants of the many villages of the open plain, still use dwellings

[1] Ritter, *Erdkunde*, vol. xi. p. 292 ff. Chwolson, *Ssabier*, vol. i. p. 303. Malan, *Philosophy and Truth*, p. 87.

[2] Kiepert's Map.

exactly similar to those seen on ancient Assyrian slabs;[1] scarcity or rather want of timber, forcing them to adopt this singular style of building. Bare stone walls raised without cement into the shape of a sugar loaf, with a hole at the top for light, have in all ages been characteristic of the neighbourhood. Everywhere in the plain one meets traces of ancient canals of irrigation, by which the waters of the Belik were utilized to spread fertility throughout the year on all sides. But the traveller is especially attracted by the "Wells of Rebecca," where Eliezer met the future wife of Isaac, and where Sarah had certainly often been, long before her. Even now, the flocks of Harran gather round them each morning, and the women still come to them to draw water for the day's use.[2]

The fullest description of this temporary home of Abraham, which became the permanent centre of the eastern branch of his race, is given by Mr. Malan.[3] He approached it from the north, where "the green slopes of the lower hills of Armenia" have sunk into a rolling level as the traveller advances from Edessa or Oorfa. "At every step," says he, "on the way to Harran, which now lies as it did of old at about six hours' march from Oorfa, the hills on the right hand and on the left of the plain recede farther and farther, until you find yourself fairly launched on the desert ocean; a boundless plain, strewed at times with patches of the brightest flowers, at other times with rich and green pastures, covered with flocks of sheep and goats feeding together; here and there a few camels, and the son or daughter of their owner tending them. One can quite understand

[1] *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 112.
[2] Malan's *Philosophy or Truth*, p. 373. *Vigouroux*, vol. i. p. 362.
[3] *Philosophy or Truth*, p. 93.

that the sons of this open country, the Bedouin love it, and cannot leave it; no other soil would suit them. The air is so fresh, the horizon is so far, and man feels so free, that it seems made for those whose life is to roam at pleasure, and who own allegiance to none but themselves. The ruins of the castle surmounting a mound makes Harran a landmark plainly visible from every part of the plain. That same day I walked at even to the well I had passed in the afternoon, coming from Oorfa; the well of this, the city of Nahor, 'at the time of the evening—the time when women go out to draw water.' There was a group of them filling, no longer their pitchers, since the steps down which Rebekah went to fetch the water are now blocked up, but filling their waterskins, by drawing water at the well's mouth. Everything around that well bears signs of age and of the wear of time; for as it is the only well of drinkable water there, it is much resorted to. Other wells are only for watering the flocks. There we find the troughs of various height, for camels, for sheep and for goats, for kids and for lambs; there the women wear nose-rings, and bracelets on their arms, some of gold or of silver, and others of brass, or even of glass. One of these was seen in the distance bringing to water her flock of fine patriarchal sheep; ere she reached the well, shepherds, more civil than their brethren of Horeb, had filled the troughs with water for her sheep. She was the Sheik's daughter, the 'beautiful and well-favoured' Sadheefeh. As the shadows of the grass and of the low shrubs around the well lengthened and grew dim, and the sun sank below the horizon, the women left in small groups; the shepherds followed them, and I was left alone in this vast solitude."[1]

[1] Noack, in his strange book, *Von Eden nach Golgotha*, supposes Harran to have been in the district of the Lebanon, where he fancies Eden also was.

Towards this district—six hundred miles north-west of Ur as the crow flies, and much more by the winding route of the camel track, and of the great river—Terah led his yet undivided tribe while Abraham was still in his early prime; for when he left Harran at the age of seventy-five he had lived in it so long that he spoke of it as "his country," and "the home of his kindred."

The way thither, from the south, brought the patriarch in contact with the chief seats of the civilization of the day. Passing slowly with the long train of loaded camels, and the still slower multitude of his herds and flocks, his tent would be pitched on the third or fourth night thirty miles from Ur,[1] outside the gate of Larsa, the Ellasar of Genesis; with its great temple-tower crowned by the glittering shrine of the sun god Shamas.[2] Then would come Erech, the modern Warka, fifteen miles north-west of Larsa, with its huge earthen walls six miles in circumference, and its houses reaching fully three miles beyond them, on the east. High above mansion and palace would be seen the tower-temple of Ishtar, the Venus of Chaldea; symbolized by the planet of that name, and famous, or rather infamous, for the obscenities associated with her worship.[3] Even yet, the ruins form a hill of a hundred feet high. Sixty miles farther north-west, Calneh, or Nipur would be reached, in a country interlaced, like all these regions, with countless threads and broader channels of irrigating waters. Here, the patriarch would

[1] Ur, in Hebrew means "light," or "flame," and may very possibly have given rise to the legends of Abraham having been condemned to be burned alive.

[2] Shemesh is "Sun" in Hebrew; so nearly were the two languages alike.

[3] Imprecations on the prostitute of the goddess Ana (Ishtar) who does not render faithfully her shameful service, still remain on the clay tablets. Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 4.

pass under the shadow of two mighty temple towers, crowned as usual with the ziggurats of the divinities to whom they were dedicated,—the one, Bel, the great Lord, afterwards known too well in Palestine as Baal, "The light of the gods," "the lofty One," "the Father of the gods," "the Creator," "the Lord of all," symbolized by the shining eastern sun; the other, Beltis, "his consort," "the mother of the gods."[1] Still journeying north-west, sixty-five miles more would bring the wanderers to Borsippa, with its tremendous tower, Birs Nimrud; the great temple of Merodach, patron of Babylon; worshipped under the symbol of the planet Jupiter.[2] Fifteen miles farther on Babel itself would come in sight, with its towers and palaces, and wide gardens, and sea of houses, and lofty encircling walls. All these lay within a hundred and fifty miles of Ur. A few miles more, and the bounds of Chaldea were passed. Cutha, from which settlers were to be sent long afterwards to re-people the land of Israel, desolate by the captivity, lay fifteen miles north-east. Next came Sippara, "Book-town,"[3]—afterwards Sepharvaim, or "the two Book-towns,"—and "Town of the Sun,"[4] of later history, where, according to legend, the sacred writings were buried, before the Deluge. Terah had still to travel a hundred miles farther north before he passed beyond the edge of the ancient delta or alluvial plain of the Euphrates, and began to ascend the table-land which marks the first step upwards, towards the far-distant mountains of Southern Armenia; and he was still nearly four hundred miles from Harran. But from this

[1] These names are given to Bel and Beltis in the Assyrian inscriptions. *Schrader*, p. 80. [2] Tomkins' *Times of Abraham*, p. 26.

[3] So Hitzig. *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, p. 80.

[4] So on the tablets. See for notices of it, 2 Kings xvii. 24; xviii. 34. Isaiah xxxvi. 19; xxxvii. 13.

point the country was as yet thinly peopled, and the flocks and herds might go where they liked, as the pasture invited them. Harran, "the City of the Heathen" of later times, would not be reached till after a journey of months from Ur.[1]

Though now in Padan Aram, "the plains of the highlands," and so far from Chaldea, Abraham would find the idolatry he had hated in the far south still around him. The old Accadian worship still prevailed and the Semitic gods had also been introduced. The planet Mercury,—here known as the god Merodach; possibly a deification of Nimrod;[2]—is recorded on the tablets as "the prince of the men of Harran,"[3] and in the British Museum, a seal cylinder, showing a priest in adoration before his altar, has the inscription "the god of Harran."[4] Even then, the priests must have been practised astronomers, for the worship of the planets implies a systematic watching of every phase and object of the heavens. It was a land that might please Terah and Nahor for its pastures, and its temples would offer them the idol sanctuaries in which they chose to worship, but the lofty spirit of Abraham craved something higher.

[1] The distances and position are taken from the map and text of Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. Harran was regarded in Roman times as the centre of local heathenism, as Edessa was of Christianity.

[2] Prof. Sayce. *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. pp. 243 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*, ii. 247; iii. 168.

[4] An inscription in the British Museum (K. 2701) records an omen in favour of King Esarhaddon (B.C. 681), noticed from the top of the moon temple at Harran. The moon was seen "over the cornfields, with two crowns on its head; a double halo. It was taken as meaning that the king, who was aged, should crown his son also, and this was at once done. The planet Mercury, I should add, stood by the side of the moon—and was interpreted as indicating his now crowned son.

Separation from idolatry had become the fixed passion of his soul. Pure amidst prevailing corruption, true to the worship of the One God amidst universal apostasy; his tent, like the ark of Noah, preserved the hopes of the world in a wild ocean of moral and religious degeneracy. It was under such circumstances that the "call" came to him, we know not how, from God, to carry out his father's long-neglected purpose of leaving the Euphrates and passing on to Canaan in the far south-west. He was now seventy-five years old, and Terah had yet sixty years to live, when the mysterious summons was thus divinely sent; but somewhere about two thousand years before Christ—rather more than less—the resolution was finally taken, by which the future religious history of the world was to spring from the movements of a small Arab tribe.

It is necessary, in trying to realize the patriarch's story, to remember that it was as the chief of a tribe that Abraham set out for Canaan. His brother Nahor, and the part of the clan dependent on him, stayed behind in the plains of Harran; to become the father of twelve Arab tribes—the Nahorites[2]—as Abraham was to be that of twelve tribes of Hebrews. But the descendants of Nahor were to wander in Edom, on the Euphrates, and over Mesopotamia; in Bashan, and to the east of Jordan, and in Northern Arabia,[3] almost unknown and wholly insignificant in history, while those of Abraham were to form the People of God, and to give mankind His Incarnate Son, the Saviour of the world. Nor is it unworthy of notice, in connection with their divergent futures, that Abraham's

[1] "Abraham," in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch*, gives the date as B.C. 2146.

[2] Gen. xxii. 22–24.

[3] See table in Bunsen's *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. pp. 78, 79.

posterity alone, of all the tribes descended from Terah, abandoned the nomadic for a settled life.

It was, apparently, an age of special restlessness among the Semitic races. From what causes we know not, they were pressing on, one after another, towards the north or west. The Phenicians had, perhaps long before, migrated from the shores of the Persian Gulf and settled in Palestine; in the islands of the eastern Mediterranean; and on the coasts of the Egyptian delta: Semitic tribes had moved northward from Babylonia to Assyria; the Arameans were ascending the course of the Euphrates and forming colonies on the eastern frontier of Syria; and Terah had resolved on emigrating to Canaan, years ere Abraham actually set out for it.[1] It has even been thought that there are traces of a conquest of Syria and Palestine by Assyria about this time.[2]

It is impossible that such influences should not have affected the tribe of which Abraham was head, as well as others; for the south-west was then, as it continued to be for ages, the El Dorado or Golden Land of the Arab races of Asia and Syria. There, Palestine lay, beyond the desert; a very Paradise in comparison with it; with its brooks of water, its fountains and depths springing out of valleys and hills; its wheat and barley, its vines and fig trees and pomegranates; its oil-olive and honey.[3] And still beyond, the valley of the Nile had irresistible attractions, in its rich fertility, to the Arab tribes far and near. Indeed, from the earliest ages some of them had settled in the east of Egypt, where they were known as the Amu or herdsmen,[4] and were a constant incitement to other

[1] Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, i. 365. Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. i. p. 54.

[2] Kenrick's *Phenicia*, pp. 141, 340*n*.

[3] Deut. vii. 7.

[4] Brugsch's *Egypt*, vol. i. p. 7.

related peoples to enter, if possible, a region so different from the wastes they themselves inhabited.

But though such everyday motives might fill the hearts of Abraham's tribe, in discussing over their tent-fires the desirableness of choosing another country than Harran; a far deeper thought lay in the bosom of their chief. To him, the maintenance among his people of the worship of the One Living and True God, endangered so greatly in Mesopotamia, was doubtless, above all things, the supreme consideration. It urged him with the authority of the "voice of God" Himself in his soul—"to get out of his country and away from his kindred, sunk as they were in idolatry, and from his father's house, to a land that would be divinely shown him"—obedience carrying with it the grand promise that his posterity would become a great nation, and that he himself, through them, would be a blessing to the whole world. That the "call" and the promise were alike from God, needs no surer proof than the position of the patriarch in the future religious history of the world.

We are indebted to the speech of St. Stephen before his accusers for the disclosure of the fact, that this "call" had already been given to Abraham before he left Ur of the Chaldees;[1] and it is quite possible that it was through his influence that Terah set out from that region, with the intention of passing on to Canaan. But, from whatever cause, he chose to settle permanently at Harran, and left Abraham, finally, to take the momentous step alone. It is not clear from Genesis whether Terah was dead before the migration of his son; but St. Stephen tells us he was;[2] so that, as Abraham was seventy-five when he left Harran, and Terah two hundred and five at his death, the birth of the patriarch could not have

[1] Acts vii. 2. [2] Acts vii. 4.

taken place before his father's hundred and thirtieth year. This, however, is not singular, as Abraham's marriage with Keturah is set down in the chronology of our Bibles as taking place in his hundred and forty-third year.[1]

That Abraham set forth at the head of a large body of tribesmen is evident, from his taking with him all his herds, and all the male and female slaves born in his tents, or whom he had bought in Harran; a multitude so large in the aggregate as to enable him, a few years later, to select from among them, on the moment, three hundred and eighteen men trained to the soldierly defence of the camp, to pursue Chedorlaomer. In fact, though he did not call himself a king, but preferred the simple dignity of a tribal chief, he was always regarded by the Canaanite kings as their equal, and allied himself with them as such.[2] Josephus,[3] quoting from an author now lost,[4] even tells us that "Abraham ruled in Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldeans. But after a long time he got him up, and removed from that country, with his people also, and came into the land then called the land of Canaan, and this when his posterity were become a multitude." He adds that the name of Abraham was still famous at Damascus, and that a house was still shown as his.[5] That the Jews should not have preserved traditions of Abraham's connection with Damascus doubtless rose

[1] If Terah were dead before Abraham left Harran, the "seventy years" in Gen. xi. 26 must mean that the youngest son was born when Terah was seventy, and the others at long subsequent dates.

[2] Ewald's *Geschichte*, vol. i. p. 441.

[3] *Ant.*, i. 7, 2. [4] Nicolaus Damascenus.

[5] With all this, there is no ground for thinking of Abraham, with Bertheau (*Geschichte*, p. 218), as heading a great migration of vast masses of people.

from the fact that, apparently in the interval between his death and that of Jacob, that city was taken by the Arameans, or Syrians—from the river Kir, in Armenia—and was thus wholly and permanently rendered a foreign community to the Hebrews. Henceforth, indeed, it was often spoken of by them simply as "Aram."

The journey from Harran would naturally lie along the track leading towards the ford of the Euphrates and the road beyond, used as a caravan route to and from Damascus. Leaving the wells and the sanctuary of his tribe,[1] round which his brother Nahor lingered, and where we still find Laban two generations later; he would cross the great river near where the ancient Apamea once stood, and the modern Birs now stands. Thus far up the course of the stream, the steamer *Tigris*, under Col. Chesney, was able to ascend in 1836: a distance of 1,117 miles from the Persian Gulf. The country is rough with hills, the outlying spurs of the great Taurus chain; though pastoral stretches intervene; but it is not till far to the south that the broad levels of Chaldea are reached. It took Abraham two days to reach the great stream rolling at his feet beneath high chalk cliffs, in volume and breadth not unlike the Rhone. The ford by which he crossed it, apparently at Zeugma—a little west of Birs—is still in use. Once on the western side, he was finally committed to the journey on which his heart had so long been set. Others had borne before him the name of "Hebrews," for that of "Heber,"[2] a remote ancestor, is almost the same; but henceforth it was peculiarly applicable to him and his descendants, as those who had "passed over" from the far side of the "Great River."

The old track or road to Damascus stretched on,

[1] *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 445.

[2] Heber, in Luke iii. 35; Eber, in Gen. x.

south-west, to the future site of another Apamea; passing through Berœa, where Julian halted on his last fatal campaign, after two days' laborious march from Antioch; through Chalcis, with its marsh, where salt is still gathered after the heats; then, south, through Hamath, the future capital of a Syrian kingdom, conquered by David; and on through Emesa, famous in after-days for its magnificent Temple of the Sun, to Damascus: a distance, in all, of between three hundred and fifty and four hundred miles.[1] He had been only about a hundred and thirty miles from the Mediterranean when he left the banks of the Euphrates,[2] but his journey had run nearly parallel with it, and at Damascus it still lay between fifty and sixty miles to the west.

Dean Stanley has described the circumstances of the journey with a picturesqueness which invites quotation. "All their substance that they had gotten is heaped high on the backs of their kneeling camels. 'The slaves that they had bought in Harran' run along by their sides. Round them are their flocks of sheep and goats, and the asses, moving beneath the towering forms of the camels. The chief is there, amidst the stir of movement, or resting at noon within his black tent, marked out from the rest by his cloak of brilliant scarlet, by the fillet of rope which binds the loose handkerchief round his head, by the spear which he holds in his hand to guide the march, and to fix the encampment. The chief's wife, the princess[3] of the tribe, is there in her own tent,[4] to make

[1] Kiepert's Map.

[2] On a line with Oorfa the Mediterranean is distant only eighty-three miles.

[3] Sarah = princess; Sarai = the queenly one. This is the latest etymology. Earlier explanations made Sarai = my princess; or "noble," or even "contentious," "quarrelsome."

[4] Gen. xxiv. 67.

the cakes, and prepare the usual meal of milk and butter;[1] the slave or the child is ready to bring in the red lentile soup for the weary hunter,[2] or to kill the calf for the unexpected guest. Even the ordinary social state is still the same: polygamy, slavery, the exclusiveness of family ties; the period of service for the dowry of a wife; the solemn obligations of hospitality; the temptations, easily followed, into craft and falsehood."[3]

The way from Damascus to Canaan lay, at first, straight from Damascus, across the green valley of the Pharpar, the arid hill country of Geshur, and the richly-wooded, rolling landscapes of Bashan, with their straths of rich pasture, and the flow of clear waters in every bottom, to Edreï; one of the two capitals of Bashan, and, in after-times, the seat of Og, its Amorite king; on the northern edge of the Hauran, or "Burnt Country." Without water, without access except over rocks and through defiles all but impracticable, the strange city fortress would be as novel a sight to Abraham as its ruins, amongst a wilderness of shattered volcanic rocks, seamed with countless fissures, are to the traveller still. Thence his slow-footed camels, and still slower flocks and herds, would turn westward, towards the Jordan, and descend from the uplands, over which they had hitherto advanced, to the ford, seven miles below the Sea of Galilee. The isolated Phenician colony of Bethshean, in its richly fertile hollow, under Gilboa, would, then, soon be left behind, and climbing the ascent of the hills of Samaria, and crossing over and round them for twenty, or five and twenty miles, they would reach Shechem, in the centre of Palestine, the resting-place of the patriarch for the time.

[1] Gen. xviii. 2–8. [2] Gen. xxv. 34.
[3] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 11, 12.

CHAPTER XX.

THE FRIEND OF GOD.

HAD Abraham been only the head of an Arab tribe, however famous in his day, his name must have perished long ages ago, like that of other men locally great in their day. That it is venerated still by Jew, Mahometan and Christian alike, is due to his having given the true religion to mankind, and thus being for ever identified with it.

It is nevertheless unlikely that he was absolutely the only one in Chaldea who held to the pure faith of earlier ages, in those trying times when idolatry was rapidly spreading and developing; perhaps with fierce bigotry and intolerance. There may have been other Pilgrim Fathers from the Euphrates towards Canaan or Egypt; then, in spite of its moral corruption, so famous for religious wisdom and insight; but if so they have left no trace. In Abraham, however, the almost lost truth shines out again with a splendour that has illuminated all ages since. He stands on the edge of the past, a grand figure; like Abdiel, faithful alone among the faithless; braving all personal danger in defence of his convictions, and leaving behind him home and friends; to wander, at God's command, to unknown lands, that he

might find in them that spiritual freedom denied him in his native country.

But his personal character is not alone the ground of his lofty place in the history of religion. His influence on his household and descendants, in moulding their faith by his own, and thus founding the true kingdom of God amongst men, gives him a world-wide interest. To have rejected Chaldean and Canaanitish idolatry, and in their place to have adopted a spiritual religion, marks him as second only to One other in the history of mankind. His fidelity in this is, indeed, specially noticed to his honour. "I know him," says the Almighty, "that he will charge his children and his descendants after him, to keep the way of Jehovah and live righteously and justly (by doing so)—and because of this, Jehovah will fulfil what He has promised respecting him."[1] Nor was his genuine and lofty fear of God unnoticed or unacknowledged in his own day; for the most powerful and the most religious among the foreign races in whose midst he wandered, were forward to own that "God was with him," and on this account eagerly sought his friendship and blessing.[2]

The supreme dignity of being called "The Friend of God" alike in the Old and New Testaments,[3] is only a further and grander embodiment of the same estimate of his character, under the sanction of the Divine Spirit Himself; and it is striking that even outside the Scriptures its justness has been so widely recognised, that in all Mahometan countries the name "El Khalil Allah," "The Friend of God," or simply "El Khalil,"

[1] Gen. xviii. 19. Translations of Zunz and De Wette. Dillmann explains "I know him," as equivalent to "I have made a special covenant with him." See Amos ii. 2. Hosea xiii. 5.

[2] *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 456. See Gen. xiv. 18–20; xxi. 22–32.

[3] 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isaiah xli. 8. James ii. 23.

has entirely superseded his own. But this title, so unique, is of far higher than any personal significance. It bears with it all that distinguishes a true religion from a false. Not only must God be a Divine Personality to show friendship at all; He must be the One Only God thus to attract to Himself the undivided love and homage of His creatures. He can neither be confounded with the universe, as in Pantheism, nor with idol gods. Still more, it clothes Him with the infinite attractions of a nature which, in loving, can itself be loved, and thus bases religion on its only true footing, the affections and the heart. With the Friend of God, to serve Him is no mere observance of rites or ceremonies; it must be the loyal devotion of the soul and life, transforming man into the spiritual image of Him whom He adores and delights to obey.

Herder's words on Abraham in this connection are characteristic.[1] "Men have sometimes communed with gods, genii, and departed heroes, but not with God, the One God of heaven and earth, in a way so calm and trusting. The stranger has no other friend than He, who had brought him into this remoteness; but Him he possesses as the Friend of friends. What tender passages are there in the intercourse of God with him; how He comforts, directs, cheers him with future hopes; gives him, now, the pledge of a covenant, now, the sign of friendship, now, a new name, now, symbols to impress his heart, and demands now this, now that, return of love to Himself."

It was especially as "The Father of the Faithful," that this transcendent honour was vouchsafed him. "Abraham believed in Jehovah, and He counted it to him for righteousness"—believed with a loving trust,

[1] *Geist der Ebräischen Poesie* (1827), vol. ii. p. 11.

for that is the force of the Hebrew word. It means, indeed, not simply that he yielded an intellectual assent, but that he rested on God's word as a house stands immovable on a sure foundation; that he leaned on God as weakness leans on strength; that he reposed in undoubting trust in Him as a child in its mother's arms; that his faith was no intermittent fervour, but abiding, before God, as the stream of a never failing river.[1] No delay of fulfilment ever made him waver; no difficulties or discouragements ever made him doubt. Nor was it a faith which contented itself with merely passive graces; it coloured his whole life; finding its natural expression in obeying the voice of Jehovah, keeping His charge, His commandments, His statutes, and His laws.[2] To count such a faith as itself righteousness was only to give the same name to the hidden life of the soul and to its outward manifestations.

How hard it must have been to attain such a frame, and to preserve it through life, they can best feel who are most desirous of making it their own. The influence of the universal example of idolatry itself demanded a rare moral courage to surmount; for to dare to be alone is given to very few. And even when he had learned to trust the Unseen Father, how terrible were the trials to which that confidence was exposed!

It has been well remarked that, in its application to Abraham, the title of the Father of the Faithful had a breadth of significance instinctively felt far outside the limits of his own race. He was, indeed, the Father of the chosen people, but in a nobler sense he was, also, the Father of all true believers of every age and nation. As such St. Paul adduces his name in support of a plea for the extension of the promises of God to the

[1] Gesenius' *Lexicon*, p. 65. [2] Gen. xxvi. 5.

Gentile as freely as to the Jew, and it is this which makes him the boasted ancestor of the Arab no less than of the Hebrew. "The scene of his life, as of the patriarchs generally, breathes a larger atmosphere than the contracted limits of Palestine—the free air of Mesopotamia and the desert—the neighbourhood of the vast shapes of the Babylonian monarchy on one side, and of Egypt on the other. He is not an ecclesiastic, not an ascetic, not even a learned sage; but a chief, a shepherd, a warrior, full of all the affections and interests of family and household, and wealth and power, and for this very reason the first true type of the religious man, the first representative of the whole Church of God."[1]

No details are given of the creed of Abraham, but, in addition to his confession of the One Only Living God, it must have included all that was true in the popular beliefs of Chaldea. This would imply his knowledge of the sabbath; for the seventh day, by a tradition handed down from Eden, was "holy" in his Eastern native land, and was honoured by the cessation of all work on it. He had been accustomed to weekly assemblies for public worship, if only of idols; to religious processions, music, hymns of adoration, and prayer. The burning of incense was familiar to him.[2] Propitiatory sacrifices of rams and of bulls had been so multiplied in Chaldea that their blood was spoken of as flowing like water. But he had also been familiar with the hideous sight of human sacrifice.[3] A sacred ark dedicated to one of the gods seems to have been known in Babylonia from the earliest times.[4] Some idea of the guilt of sin still

[1] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 21.

[2] Smith's *Assyr. Discov.*, p. 191. [3] See page 309.

[4] Smith's *Assyr. Discov.* p. 175. Lists of the gods appear in the inscriptions.

remained, and its due punishment was taught in popular legends, if not otherwise. The fall of the angels and of men; the story of the flood; the belief in the immortality of the soul, in a judgment to come, in a heaven of blessedness, where the holy were robed in white, and enchanting music delighted the senses; in a place of punishment, and perhaps even in the resurrection of the dead, were still articles of the popular creed, and as such must have been shared by Abraham.[1] God Himself was known to him and worshipped as El, or Elohim, a name handed down from the first ages of the world, and long retained in Chaldea and Phenicia; the populations of which, as we have seen, had originally a common home on the Persian Gulf. It is striking however, that with Abraham and in the Bible generally, El is never used alone, but always in such a combination as El Shaddai—the Almighty God; the plural form Elohim being the constant form employed instead. The true explanation of this as only an idiomatic expression of the highest adoration has been already given.[2] Some, however, have fancied they see in it a lingering trace of polytheism having changed the original singular into a plural, when gods were multiplied. But, if that be so, Abraham, and Israel in all ages after him, wrested it at once and for ever from such an idolatrous use, and consecrated it so strictly to the doctrine of One God, that it never has a plural sense in Scripture when applied to the Divinity; except in rare cases where the gods of the heathen are expressly intended.

Thus it is to Abraham we owe the transmission, not only of the knowledge of many articles of permanent

[1] Proofs of the existence of these beliefs among the Accadians are given at p. 310.

[2] See p. 11.

religious faith, and of many of the events of the earliest history of the world, utilized afterwards by Moses, under Divine guidance, in the compilation of the first books of Scripture; but also that greatest of all truths, the Unity, Personality, and Holiness of God.[1]

How Abraham could thus have given to men a doctrine so sublime, and so utterly unknown outside the sphere of revelation,[2] is a question of the highest interest, the answer to which cannot perhaps be better given than in the words of Max Müller, a few lines of which have been already quoted. "How is the fact to be explained," he asks, that the three greatest religions of the world, in which the unity of the Deity forms the keynote, are of Semitic origin? Mahometanism, no doubt, is a Semitic religion, and its very core is monotheism. But did Mahomet invent monotheism? Did he invent even a new name of God? Not at all. And how is it with Christianity? Did Christ come to preach faith in a new God? Did he or His disciples invent a new name of God? No. Christ came, not to destroy, but to fulfil, and the God whom He preached was the God of Abraham. And who is the God of Jeremiah, of Elijah, and of Moses? We answer again: The God of Abraham. Thus the faith in the One Living God, which seemed to require the admission of a monotheistic instinct, grafted in every member of the Semitic family, is traced back to one man; to him 'in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' And if from our earliest childhood we have looked upon Abraham, the Friend of God, with love and veneration, his venerable figure will assume still more

[1] We cannot readily doubt that it is to the patriarch we owe also the tables of descent of races and families; for they, too, sprang from a Chaldean centre.

[2] Bunsen, *Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 100.

majestic proportions, when we see in him the life-spring of that faith which was to unite all the nations of the earth, and the author of that blessing which was to come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ. And if we are asked how this one Abraham passed, through the denial of all other gods, to the knowledge of the one God, we are content to answer that *it was by a special divine revelation*, granted to that one man, and handed down by him to Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, to all who believe in the God of Abraham. We want to know more of that man than we do; but even with the little we know of him, he stands before us as a figure, second only to One in the whole history of the world."[1]

That Abraham, the founder of the Hebrew nation and of their religion, should move in their records only as a man among men, marks the infinite contrast between Bible history and all other. There is no cloudy dawn in the annals of the favoured race, no fabulous age of gods or demi-gods, or incredible heroes. Legend, outside Scripture, may attempt to invest their founder with supernatural attributes,[2] but, in the Bible, he is always a man and nothing more.[3] There is no confounding of the Divine and human. God remains absolutely and infinitely self-complete and unapproachable in His essence, and it

[1] The *Times*, April 14th and 15th, 1860.

[2] See a wonderful collection of such legends in Bayle's *Dictionaire*, art. Abraham.

[3] He is portrayed, above all, as a pattern of moral excellence. He is not the hero to be honoured for mighty deeds by which he exalted himself to a god or demi-god, as the ancestors of other nations are represented in their traditions. He lives in the heart of the world not as a warrior and conqueror, but as a self-sacrificing man, humbly obedient to God, acting and thinking nobly in all purity and simplicity. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, vol. i. p. 9.

is only by an act of immeasurable condescension that even the Father of the Faithful is dignified as "His Friend."[1]

Of the outward religious life of Abraham we have only incidental glimpses. Wherever he pitches his tents, an altar forms the natural sanctuary of the encampment, but it is of the simplest materials—rough stones, or modest turf, and it stands under the open sky. Of any sacrifices offered by him, except after the deliverance of Isaac on Mount Moriah, there is no hint; for the victims slain on the occasion of the great covenant granted him by Jehovah were rather customary rites of such an occasion, than offerings in the common acceptation. But whatever forms prevailed, they were carried out by himself, as at once the father and household priest. Each of his four great halting-places in Canaan—Shechem, Bethel, Hebron, and Beersheba—had its altar, no doubt near his tent, which, as that of the sheik of the tribe, would seem to have been usually pitched under the shade of some umbrageous trees, as in the case of the terebinths, or oaks at Mamre and at Shechem, or of the tamarisks at Beersheba.[2]

[1] 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isa. xli. 8. James ii. 23.

[2] The word translated "plain" in the English version, Gen. xii. 6; xiii. 18; should be terebinth, the *Pistacia terebinthus* of botanists, and the turpentine tree of the Greek islands. It is very common in the south and east of Palestine, and is generally found in situations too dry and warm for the oak, which, however, it much resembles at a distance. The word "grove" (Gen. xxi. 33), should be translated "tamarisk tree," for which the soil of Beersheba is well suited. Tristram mentions that he frequently pitched his tent under the shade of this kind of tree. Its appearance is very graceful, with its long feathering tufts and branches, closely clad with the minutest of leaves, and surmounted in spring with spikes of beautiful pink blossom, which seem to

The unique position of Abraham in connection with the worship of the true God, and as the father of the chosen people, is marked in his history by such relations to the Almighty as have never before or since been granted to any mere man. Even before his setting out for Canaan, we are told, the pain of leaving his country, and kindred, and his father's house, was softened by gracious communications from above, which stretched the brightness of a great promise, like a rainbow, over the cloud. "I will make of thee," said the Divine intimation, "a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." It is in keeping with the child-like confidence in God by which he was so marked, that the words immediately follow—"So Abram departed, as Jehovah had spoken unto him."[1] A childless man, already seventy-five, it was yet enough for him that he had the word of the Almighty. His faith in the Divine promise gave him an unwavering "confidence in things hoped for," and an abiding "conviction" of the "reality of things not seen;" and it brought its reward. His first encampment of Shechem became, in effect, a formal taking possession for his distant posterity of the land he had entered; for the promise was presently confirmed to him, "Unto thy seed will I give this land." Years passed, while the tents of the tribe were in turn pitched at Bethel, on the banks of the Nile, and at Hebron, but the promise remained unfulfilled. The faith that had so long endured triumphantly was, however, to be rewarded by a special honour, shown to no one before

envelop the whole tree in one gauzy sheet of colour. Tristram's *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 358.

[1] Gen xii. 2–4.

or since. As the great patriarch rested in his tent under the terebinths of Mamre, at Hebron, "the word of the Lord came" to him "in a vision," saying "Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Undoubting, but sorely perplexed, the long-tried man feels as if any bounty shown him can be of little good, old as he is, and ere long to die childless; with only his head slave, Eliezer of Damascus, as his heir. The custom thus indicated is of immemorial antiquity in the East, and still prevails among the Mahometans of India. In default of children, or where there are only female descendants, the father of a household adopts a slave as his heir and marries him to one of his daughters; to keep the property together.[1] Even in Scripture, indeed, we find the same practice, as in the case of the mighty Jarha, mentioned in the book of Chronicles.[2]

But the future was richer for the patriarch than he dreamed; for, presently, he seemed, in the vision, to be led outside his tent, and told to look up at the countless stars, glittering in the brightness of a Syrian sky—those stars worshipped in his native land as radiant gods, but now to be regarded only as glories of the Creator's

[1] Forbes' *Oriental Memoirs.* "Go" (Gen. xv. 2).=go hence=die. Luther, rightly "Ich gehe dahin."

[2] 1 Chron. ii. 34. In Abraham's case Eliezer had been born in his master's tents, and was thus dearer to him than a slave bought from without. The notice of Abraham's chief slave has an allusion to Damascus, which is retained in the Greek Bible. This "son of Meshek," runs the Hebrew—that is, this, my heir presumptive, is "Damesek," or Damascus "Eliezer." "Son of Meshek" means "the son of his inheritance or property." That it was not uncommon to adopt a faithful slave, and make him an heir, when his owner was childless, is seen in the case of Jarha, noticed above. Doubtless, as in this instance, the daughter of the master was often married to a favoured slave, to keep the property in the family.

power. As he did so the words fell on his ear, "like these, innumerable, shall be thy descendants." "A child of thine own shall be thy heir." Ten years had passed since the promise of the land had been given; now it was added that the inheritance should be direct, in his own posterity. It was hard to credit it, at his age, and in his circumstances, but the triumph of his unwavering confidence in God is recorded in the words, "he believed in Jehovah, and He counted it to him for righteousness." His childlike trust was reckoned as a fulfilment of the Divine law of obedience and love.

This loyal faith, which had hitherto found its all sufficing support in the word of Him who cannot lie, was now, in His infinite condescension, to have the outward assurance of a human form of covenant, to which future ages might permanently appeal. In Abraham's native Chaldea solemn agreements or treaties were confirmed by rites which still continued in use from his day to the fourth century after Christ;[1] and these were to be observed as between God and the patriarch, that he and his descendants might have a memorial of the gracious promise of the Almighty to them. The incident seems to have marked the day after the vision.[2] A young heifer, a she goat and a ram, each of three years old, were wont to be divided in the ceremony of human engagement between contracting parties, and the pieces set far enough apart to let these pass between them: as if to call down

[1] Von Böhlen's *Genesis*, p. 180. A burning lamp or fire is still used in India, in ratification of a covenant. A person promising anything, if doubted, points to the flame of a lamp, adding, 'that is my witness.' At other times, the parties to a covenant confirm it by saying, 'We invoke the lamp of the Temple.' Roberts' *Illustrations.*

[2] *Delitzsch* and *Ewald.*

on themselves the fate of the victims, if they broke the covenant thus ratified. In Abraham's case a turtle dove and a young pigeon were added, apparently as an offering. Each circumstance usual in human covenants was rigidly observed, even to the age of the creatures slain; for three was apparently the sacred number constantly used in pledges, oaths, and treaties.[1]

The divided pieces duly set at sufficient distances apart; Abraham, watchful and steadfast, stayed near to guard them, and await the end. Ere long, when the sun began to set, birds of prey, of evil omen, swooped down at the carcases, but only to be driven off.

Presently, as the short twilight of the East was giving place to night, the patriarch sank into a deep sleep—the common medium of Divine visions. "And, lo, a horror of great darkness" seemed, in his sleep to fall on him—and he heard words disclosing future sufferings to be borne by his posterity; of which the birds of bad omen and this gloom had been the fitting precursors. But, now, its blackness is strangely broken, for between the pieces of the victims are seen passing "a smoking furnace and a burning lamp"[2]—the symbols of the presence of the Almighty—and, in keeping with the brightness, the sacred words of a covenant are heard, in which the whole land is formally given to Abraham, from the river of Egypt[3] to the great river, the river Euphrates. The

[1] Ewald's *Alter.*, p. 177. Dillmann's *Genesis*, pp. 172, 260.

[2] The word "furnace," is Tannur—a large round pot of earthen or other materials, two or three feet high, narrowing towards the top. It is used for an oven by being heated within; the dough is then spread on its glowing sides, where it presently forms thin cakes. See *Illustration*, p. 436. The Tannur is still used in the East.

The word "lamp," is Lappid = Greek, Lampas, a lamp or torch. In Ex. xx. 18, it is translated "lightnings." See, also, Judg. iv. 4.

[3] The river of Egypt is the Wadi el Arish, a torrent bed on the

gift was from God, and He alone was making the promise, so that the symbols of His sanction only were seen, and thus was confirmed, by a sacred pledge, this wondrous covenant between God and man.

In establishing the kingdom of God amongst men it was still, however, necessary that its members should have some mark to distinguish and separate them from the idolatrous people around; and for this purpose the rite of circumcision was adopted. It had been practised before, by various races, but henceforth it was to become the special badge of the chosen people. The Chaldeans, Abraham's own people knew nothing of it, nor did the tribes of Palestine; except perhaps the Phenicians;[1] but the Egyptians had practised it from immemorial antiquity.[2] It is, however, indifferent, whether this be so or not, for its introduction among the Hebrews had a special and independent significance; and, in any case, it stands only in the same relation to Divine truth as the use of sacrifice, which obtained before Moses; or of baptism, which was practised before Christ gave it the dignity of a sacrament. To Abraham and his posterity circumcision was an abiding sign of consecration to God, and of admission into the congregation of Jehovah. The nations around had their distinctive forms of dedication to their idols, in the fanciful trimming of their beards and hair, forbidden so strictly to the Jews,[3] and in the tatooing the

south of Philistia. The Euphrates became the boundary of the kingdom of Israel under David. 1 Kings iv. 21; viii. 65.

[1] Jos., *Ant.*, viii. 10, 3. His seemingly contradictory testimony is cleared up by passages in Herodotus. Yet in Ezekiel's time they do not seem to have been circumcised, unless the language of Ezek. xxxii, 30, means by uncircumcised, simply heathen, unclean.

[2] Ebers' *Ægypten und die Bücher Mose's*, pp. 280, 281.

[3] Lev. xix. 27.

sign of a god on the brow, the arm, or the hand,[1] as is still common in the East. But circumcision was much more than this, for it presented the child or the man as an offering to God—a part of the body standing for the whole—and tacitly owned that even life was rightfully His, though redeemed by so slight and typical a substitution.[2] And though in later ages a mark of division and narrowness, in the tents of the early Hebrews it was only a much needed and abiding badge of separation from the degenerate races amidst which they lived, and of consecration to Jehovah.[3]

The institution of this rite marks the formal establishment of the true religion among the posterity of

[1] Isa. xliv. 5. "Subscribe with his hand unto the Lord," should be "writes on his hand the name or sign of Jehovah."

[2] Ewald's *Alter.*, p. 124.

[3] Wilkinson has found proof of the practice of circumcision in Egypt as early as the fourth dynasty, that is, long before Abraham (vol. v. p. 318). There is also an instructive painting of the time of the Oppression of the Jews in Egypt, showing the mode of performing the rite. It is described by Chabas, *Revue Archæologique* (1861), pp. 298 ff. Nearly all mummies, moreover, are circumcised. *Ebers*, p. 233. The Jews circumcise on the eighth day: the Mahometans, properly in the thirteenth year, as the time when Ishmael was circumcised. The rite has been found widely practised where it might have been least expected—among the negroes of the Congo and many African tribes, including the Caffres; and also in the Fiji islands; among the Indians of Central America, the ancient Mexicans and other Indian races. Curiously, *The Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. p. 122, and *Land and the Book*, p. 590, not knowing the evidence of the Egyptian monuments, suppose that the priests of Pharaoh learned about circumcision from Joseph. The remark of Michaelis is acute, that if Abraham had not already known about it, more minute directions would have been given him. *Mos. Recht*, vol. iv. p. 185. Ebers (p. 233) says, that, in Egypt, as among the Hebrews, "uncircumcised" was equal to "unclean"; "circumcised," to "clean," or "pure."

Abraham, and was thus the first step in that gracious plan, which culminated in the life and death of our Divine Saviour. Henceforward, Abraham and his tribe bore in their persons a pledge of loyalty to God, and of a life worthy of Him. To mark the great occasion, the promise of the birth of a son within a year—the child of Sarah—accompanied the institution; and the name Abraham, the "Father of a multitude (of nations)," was substituted for Abram, the "exalted Father" or tribal head, while that of Sarah, "the princess," took the place of Sarai, "the princely." Abraham, now ninety years old, had lived for twenty-three years among the corrupt and idolatrous tribes of Canaan. Henceforth, through this self-revelation of God, the contrast between Him and the vain gods around rose in his soul to its full greatness and immeasurable significance. From this time he recognises and worships God as El Shaddai, the God who has and exercises all power; and holds himself and his race as for ever separated from every god but Him. His relation towards Him is henceforth closer and nobler than that of other men, for he holds from Him a covenant, divinely sealed, constituting him and his posterity the People of God. Already, in the days of Moses, circumcision is assumed as an established rite, long prevalent; the badge of Israel as the chosen race.

CHAPTER XXI.

PALESTINE AND EGYPT IN ABRAHAM'S DAY.

THE land to which Abraham had been divinely led was one in keeping with the great purpose of God; that to his descendants should be committed, pre-eminently, the religious education of the world. Lying in the centre of the then known world; in close contact at once with Europe, Asia, and Africa; spiritual influences would radiate from it to a wider circumference than was possible from any other country. Its wide variety of climate, moreover, embracing every gradation between that of temperate regions, in the district of Lebanon, and that of the sub-tropical, in the valley of the Jordan; secured that the revelation which was to go forth from it to the whole world, would embody a range of natural experiences which would fit it for all countries and populations; for its imagery and modes of thought must necessarily be coloured by its composition in a land which was, in effect, an epitome of the habitable world.

Moreover, its delightful brightness, and the fruitfulness of its soil, which did not require the toilsome cultivation necessary in lands like Egypt; and its nearness to countries from whose resources it could easily procure what it did not itself yield, were fitted to raise its people almost at once above the need of a struggle for their primary

wants; and thus to give freedom and leisure for higher thoughts. Nor could the fact that Canaan was only a narrow strip of coast, hemmed in on one side by the terrible desert and on the other by the boundless ocean, be without influence on the religious life, in the vivid contrasts it offered of abundance and want, and of life and death.

Both Palestine and Egypt, appear in the earliest glimpses we have of them, as lands already occupied by a settled population, with towns and governments. An Egyptian speaks, even before Abraham's day, of its cornfields, figs, vineyards and fortresses;[1] and it is noted in Genesis that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan, or Tanis, in Egypt; an Asiatic settlement which carried to the valley of the Nile the worship of Baal, the chief god of the Hittites.[2] An Egyptian of a later date, but still earlier than the patriarch, speaks of it as "abounding in wine more than in water," of the plentifulness of its honey, and of its palms; adding that all its trees were fruit-bearing, and that it yielded barley and wheat, and had no end of cattle.[3] As to its olives, they were so abundant that one district had an olive tree for its hieroglyphic sign.

But amidst all this early civilization there had already spread a profound moral corruption. Human sacrifice marked the worship of the gods, and unnatural sins received their name from Sodom, one of the Canaanite towns; nor was it possible that any population which might settle in their midst could escape being more or less affected by these baneful influences.

[1] Chabas *Études*, pp. 106-114. Brugsch's *History of Egypt*, vol. i. p. 100. *Les Pap. Hiératiques de Berlin* (Chabas), pp. 79, 85.

[2] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iii. p. 113.

[3] *Story of Saneha*; *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. p. 139. *Maspero*, pp. 108-110.

Yet, withal, the natural phenomena of the country seemed to provide special Divine warnings to rouse its people from evil and urge them to a nobler life. Earthquakes of great violence were not unknown; for the cities of the plain perished by one, and Amos records another in the days of King Uzziah.[1] Violent floods not unfrequently wasted its valleys.[2] Terrible storms and burning winds from the desert swept over it at times; seasons of drought brought after them famine; and visitations of grasshoppers and other insect plagues were only too frequent.[3] Swift death came with the plague,[4] and hateful diseases, like leprosy, clung to numbers through life, while property and even existence were constantly exposed to the sudden inroads of enemies; for Palestine was at all times coveted by the nations round it. In the hand of God such judgments might well rouse His people to watchfulness, and, indeed, often won them back to a higher life, when urged by the voice of their prophets.

When we remember how large a space the smallest oasis, or even a well, occupies in Arab chronicles, as the scene of vehement and bloody disputes for its possession, it may be readily conceived how eager the struggle must have been, from the earliest times, for a land which seemed the paradise of the world to the dwellers in the waste and thirsty regions to the east and south of it. Hence, from the first, we find Canaan peopled by many races, each tenaciously holding its district, however small, and refusing to lose its individuality amidst the new waves of population pressing in from time to time. What the Caucasus was to the Aryan races, Palestine was to

[1] Amos i. 1. Tiberias was almost destroyed by an earthquake in 1837.
[2] Judges v. 21. Amos viii. 8.
[3] Joel i. and ii.
[4] Amos iv. 10.

the Semitic; in both, a crowd of tribes, independent of each other, thronged to take possession of the tempting valleys. In the days of Abraham, however, there was still much open space for pasture between the bounds of the various peoples.

Of the original inhabitants of the Holy Land it is difficult to speak with confidence, but they seem to have survived in Abraham's time and still later, in the Horites or Cave dwellers, who, latterly, were found chiefly in Mount Seir. It may perhaps be of them that Job speaks, ages later, as driven from their possessions into the most barren parts of Mount Seir, by invaders, and maintaining their lives only in the utmost misery; though still fierce, when opportunity offered, against their conquerors.[1]

Part of the country on both sides of the Jordan was held by a race of men, known variously as the Refaim, the Emim, the Zamzummim, the Sons of Anak,[2] and the Amorites. This last name, indeed, simply means dwellers on the hill tops, from their custom of building their fortified towns on heights, like the castles of the robber knights of Europe in the middle ages. As I have noticed before, the Hebrews were struck with awe by their height and bulk of body, and looked on them as giants; as the Goths of antiquity were regarded in their day, or as the splendid north European races of the present time are regarded now, among less nobly grown peoples.[3] "The Amorites," says Amos,[4] centuries later, are "high as a

[1] Job xxiv. 5–8; xxx. 1-10. It would be a parallel case to that of the Bushmen, driven into the African desert and mountain caves by stronger races; or of the Eskimo and the Terra del Fuegians driven into the terrible extremes of the North and South, respectively.

[2] Anak, = the Wearer of a "chain round the neck," = the King. [3] See p. 188. [4] See p. 253.

cedar, and strong as an oak,"[1] and with this they were naturally warlike and fierce. Their country, called by the Egyptians, from their name, Amar, reached from the heights of Akrabbim, the "Scorpion Steps" of the central hills,[2] far into the Negeb or South Country of Judah, and also on the south of the Dead Sea east and south, embracing Bashan and the country south of it, on the east of the Jordan. Part of them, under the name of Jebusites, held Jerusalem till the days of David,[3] and the hills long their chief seat still retain the names of "Amarin" among the fellahs. Two of their fortified towns, Debir and Kadesh, are yet to be seen on Egyptian monuments. The former is apparently the same as Kiriath Sepher, or Book-town,[4] a proof in its name of an advanced civilization. The latter, mentioned in the invasion of Chedorlaomer in Abraham's day, is represented as built on a hill side, with a stream at the foot, and embosomed in trees, showing a very different condition of the far south of Palestine in that age from its present characteristics. East of the Jordan their chief city was Ashteroth Karnaim, the "city of the two-horned Ashteroth,"—the crested moon—which was worshipped under the form of this goddess or Astarte, the Istar of Assyria, to whom the moon and the planet Venus[5] were sacred.[6] Nor are we without some glimpses of even the

[1] A valley at Jerusalem bore the name of the Valley of Refaim or of "the giants," till the days of Joshua, and even much later. Josh. xviii. 16. Isa. xvii. 5 Ezekiel says of Jerusalem, "Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite."

[2] Amos ii. 9. [3] Josh. xvii. 15.

[4] Prof. Sayce says that Hebron, not Kadesh, was the "City of Books." *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. p. 28. M. Chabas gives the honour to Debir, as in the text.

[5] Schrader, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1874), p. 337.

[6] Little is known of the religion of the Amorites, but it was evidently borrowed, in part, at least, from Chaldea, and yet differed

personal appearance of this ancient race. The Egyptian monuments represent them as wearing a long close robe with short sleeves, bound round the waist by a girdle; their hair darkened by exposure but elaborately dressed and worn long, sometimes with an ornamented fillet round the head; and with flowing reddish beards, which contrasted strongly with a tawny complexion and blue eyes.[1]

In war they used strong chariots, but, like ourselves in the middle ages, their chief arm was the bow; an oblong shield defended the archer from the weapons of the enemy. Moreover, in the picture of the assault of Dapur or Debir, by Rameses II., a shield, pierced with three arrows, and surmounted by a fourth, tied across the top of a flagstaff, glitters over the highest towers of the citadel as their national standard.[2]

The Amalekites, apparently an Arab race, lived in the extreme south, where only the pasturage of wandering flocks, by tent-using tribes, was possible. They seem, before Abraham's time, to have been one of the strongest and most warlike peoples of North-west Arabia, and had doubtless often invaded Palestine from the south and

from that of the forefathers of the Hebrews (Josh. xxiv. 15). It was, however, largely the same as that of the Phenicians (1 Kings xxi. 26). It is curious to find that the name Senir, given to Hermon, the grandest peak of Lebanon, is an Amorite word. The Refaim or giants were also called Nephilim, which may mean men of a different birth from the common. Oehler, *Herzog*, xxi. p. 417. Graetz, however, thinks it means the "overthrown," in reference to the tradition of their having sought to fight against heaven, at the Tower of Babel. In Genesis vi., indeed, the word translated giants is Nephilim. But see page 188, *note*.

[1] There is an admirable copy of the portrait of an Amorite from the Egyptian monuments, at the beginning of Mr. Tomkins' *Life and Times of Abraham*.

[2] Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 309.

sought to make it their own. They first come before us as holding the whole district from the south of Canaan to Egypt, and also as seated on what were later the hills of Ephraim, which then bore their name. They appear, however, to have been early driven into the desert, but they never forgot that they had once been owners of part of the much coveted land of hills and valleys, and constantly sought to regain their old footing. It was doubtless the fond clinging to the hope of some day making Canaan, or at least part of it, their own again, that caused their fierce Bedouin attacks on Israel on its way from Egypt, cutting off the weary and the stragglers, and harassing the march. In the Hebrews they saw only rival competitors for a great prize, and strove hard to keep them from it; but drew down on themselves, instead, a terrible curse. "I swear," said Moses, "with hand uplifted to the throne of Jehovah, that He proclaims war in Amalek from generation to generation."[1] How this was fulfilled will be seen hereafter; age after age the Hebrews hated and sought to destroy them, till the last known representative of the race, Haman, "the Agagite," that is, "of the royal Amalekite family," was hanged through the influence of Esther, the Jewess, at the court of the king of Persia.

These various races had at one time occupied, more or less wholly, the wide regions beyond the Jordan as far as the Euphrates, and southward to the Red Sea. The few names connected with them which still survive, are apparently Semitic; and the fact that the chiefs, when overcome by Israel in later times, found a refuge among the Philistines,[2] themselves a branch of the Semitic race, apparently from the colonies which early settled in the eastern islands of the Mediterranean, seems to confirm

[1] Exod. xvii. 16. I give Ewald's translation.

[2] Josh. ii. 22. 2 Sam. xxi. 16–22

the belief that the primitive population of Palestine was of that great stock.

The Hittites seem to have been a different people from the great confederacy of the Cheta, now known as the Hittite empire, whose strength in Syria tried the whole power of Egypt under Rameses II., four hundred years after Abraham's time. They may, however, have been a related tribe, or an isolated and feeble colony. In Palestine the sons of Heth appear as dwellers in the valleys, in contrast to the mountaineer Amorites,[1] from whom they differed radically in their occupations and modes of life; while striving as far as possible to maintain their independence. We find them scattered from Hebron in the south, to Bethel, in the middle of the land;[2] fond of peace; living in settled communities; acting through popular assemblies; and marked by a gentle civilization. It was with the Amorites that Abraham allied himself for war; but when he wished secure possession of property he turned to the sons of Heth.

The Perizzites, a name meaning, like that of the Hittites, "dwellers in the open country," were a peaceful race; preferring quiet villages to fortresses, and living in the fertile tracts of Central Palestine,—the graziers, farmers, and peasants of the time, though only few, apparently, in numbers. Like them, the Hivites, another clan, were little inclined to war, but sought a modest industrious life in the central district, where Gibeon was one of their chief towns; a people preferring, like the Phenicians, to submit at once to any invader, and thus secure their commercial interests, rather than endanger them by fighting for independence.[3] Their name perhaps points

[1] *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 374. *See* p. 252.

[2] Gen. xxiii. 26, 34; xxvii. 46. Judges i. 26.

[3] The case of the Gibeonites with Joshua is an instance. It is

to their cities forming free republics, for it may mean "the communities;" though, possibly, it alludes to their position as an "inland people."

The name Canaanite was especially given to the Phenician settlements in the rich valley of the Jordan, where the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah belonged to them, and also the delightful meadows and town of Bethshean, below the Sea of Galilee. Shechem and Hebron, likewise, are thought by some to have been theirs.[1] But their special seat was on the low lands bordering the Mediterranean, where they had been settled, no one knows how long. The keenest business people of antiquity, their name, which originally meant a "lowlander," came gradually to be synonymous with a "trader;" while their famous cities of Sidon and Tyre[2] were the seats of a wondrous commercial activity and energy. Even in Abraham's day the chimneys of their great glassworks and dyeing factories may have caught the eye from the inland hills, as they still did in the days of Christ; and their vast harbours crowded with sea-going ships, and lined with vast warehouses, may even in the days of the patriarch have been the glory of the land. Everywhere, either as masters of the sea and famous mariners, or as founders of prosperous colonies in the Mediteranean islands, on the coast of the Egyptian delta, and even in distant regions, their energy and prominence made their name an equivalent for the inhabitants of the country generally.

to be noted that the elders and citizens of Gibeon decide the course taken, nor is any king of Gibeon mentioned in the list of cities and kings in Josh. xii. 9–24. Every form of government seems to have had its representative among the Canaanite tribes.

[1] Schrader, in *Riehm*, art. Canaaniter. *See* p. 249.

[2] The date of the founding of Old Tyre was given by the priests, as B.C. 2750. Maspero's *Hist. Anc.*, p. 192.

The Philistines, who held the rich plain from the foot of the hills of Judea to the sea after having driven out the peaceful Avites, were a people allied to the Phenicians. They seem to have been a branch of the primitive race which had once spread itself over the whole district of Lebanon and in the Jordan valley, and had in part launched off to Crete and other Mediterranean islands. From thence some returned, it is not known when, to the southern coast of Palestine, and there founded the future kingdom of the Philistines. Their history shows them to have been at once warlike and given to commerce, for they were the first who checked the career of Hebrew conquest in the days of Joshua. But if in this they were very different from the unwarlike Phenicians, they resembled them in concentrating their strength in cities on the sea coast, which they not only fortified, but made the seats of a wide transmarine commerce. Thus, Askalon had a great trade with Cyprus, and boasted of the richest and oldest temple of Venus, the goddess of that island, in any foreign territory. Indeed, the wealth and power of the Philistine cities imply a trade which must have almost rivalled that of Tyre and Sidon, and may perhaps have been largely due to Canaanite settlers from the north. It is likely that the Avites whom they subdued, continued to till the fields for their new masters as they had before for themselves; and we know that the remnants of some of the conquered Canaanite tribes, the Refaim among others, found a home in their territory and helped them in their wars. Thus the Philistines proper may well have devoted themselves, as it seems they did, especially to military power and enterprise; while the country grew rich and strong by the co-operation of other races in more profitable directions.[1]

[1] The Philistines to the last were especially warlike, for David

Among these various races, scattered in small communities over the land, Abraham at the head of a tribe, numbering in all, perhaps, several thousands, pitched his tents, on entering Canaan. His immense flocks must have had ample room for pasture without invading the rights of his neighbours, else one so peaceful and just would have chosen other camping grounds. But, in those days, even two such powerful sheiks as himself and Lot, could set up their tents in a spot so central and attractive as the plain of Shechem, without encroaching on any one. There, under the grateful shade of the Oak of Moreh,[1] in the midst of a wide valley, green with grass, grey with olives, dotted with gardens, and musical with rushing springs; between Mount Ebal on one side, Mount Gerizim on the other, and the sloping heights which rise to form the watershed of Central Palestine on the west,[2] he remained till fresh pastures were needed. Then, leaving the simple altar he had built to Jehovah, as a sacred remembrance of his stay, he and his people moved southwards and pitched their tents on the uplands between Bethel on the west, and Hai, "the ruin heap," on the east, marking the temporary encampment as usual by another rude altar, as a local sanctuary.

A failure of the rains, ere long, however, forced the patriarch to remove once more; this time, for a short

had a body guard from among them. The Cherethites and the Pelethites of 2 Sam. xx. 7 are regarded generally as having been Philistines, though the Targum translates the words "archers and slingers."

[1] In Deut. xi. 30, we read of "the oaks of Moreh." The meaning of the word Moreh, is variously given, as "the Teacher" (Schenkel's *Bib. Lex.*), "Arrow Flight," "Early Rain," "Fruitful." Mühlau and Volck's *H. W. B.* It was very likely the name of the owner of the ground, as in the case of Mamre, at Hebron.

[2] *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 296. *The Land and The Book*, p. 470.

period, to Egypt; the drought having caused a dearth in Palestine, while the valley of the Nile, watered by the unfailing bounty of the great river, then, as in after ages, attracted the neighbouring peoples in such times of scarcity.[1]

Different Semitic tribes, allied to the Hebrews—apparently driven from their former homes in Chaldea and Northern Syria,—had long pressed towards Egypt even in prosperous years, and were gradually filling the Delta to such an extent as threatened political danger. To check their entrance in still greater numbers, which was almost as much dreaded as that of the northern hordes into the Roman empire in later ages, an Egyptian king of an earlier date than Abraham had built a strongly fortified wall across the isthmus of Suez; the prototype of such walls as those of Severus in our own country, or of that of Probus, along the border of the European provinces of Rome. Still, the migration continued, though peacefully; for the Egyptians needed shepherds, and admitted them for their own advantage; but in the end the evil anticipated was realized, apparently after Abraham's time, in the subversion of the native dynasty by "Shepherd Kings" of the hated Amu race; the name for shepherds on the monuments.

The town of Zoan, in the Delta, then known to the Egyptians by the same name as Tyre, was already a

[1] So Herod brought vast stores of wheat from Egypt for the relief of the Jews, in the years B.C. 23 and 24. Jos., *Ant.*, xv. 9, 2. Under Augustus, the wheat tax on Egypt for the wants of Rome, was 3,000,000 bushels a year. Friedländer, *Sittengesch. Roms*, vol. i. p. 30. Mr. Finn, in *Sunday at Home* (1872), p. 327, says that in 1870, the Philistine country was almost depopulated, the crops having failed, and the inhabitants having gone to Egypt for food. Egypt, on the other hand, has at times drawn supplies from Palestine, when the Nile has failed to rise.

witness to this tide of Asiatic immigration, for it had been built by Semitic settlers, as shown by the worship followed in it, seven years before Hebron in southern Canaan.

Passing across the uplands of the south country of Canaan, and through the district of Hebron, Abraham would thus find little difficulty in entering a land to which so many of kindred blood had preceded him.

It is thought by some, indeed, that when he visited Egypt the great revolution had already taken place, which drove the native Pharaoh as a fugitive to the distant south, and seated a Shepherd King, of the line known to the Egyptians as the Hyksos,[1] in his place. But it is much more probable that the last kings of the twelfth dynasty, one of the greatest in Egyptian history, were still reigning.[2]

In either case, when he passed the well guarded frontier wall, a new and strange world would be around him. The vast pyramids were already ancient, for at least eight dynasties had passed away since the first had been built. Populous colonies of Semitic peoples had brought the north of the Delta into high cultivation, and filled it with busy commerce, while to the south of them, the whole valley of the Nile had been united under one sceptre; the risings of the Nile brought into strict control; a vast reservoir of the superfluous waters of each year's inundation provided in the huge artificial lake Moeris, and the country covered with towns, cities and

[1] The word Hyksos is the name of hatred given by the Egyptians to these kings. It means "robber chiefs." Ebers' *Ægypten*, in *Richm.* Josephus, *C. Ap.*, i. 14, makes it = "shepherd kings."

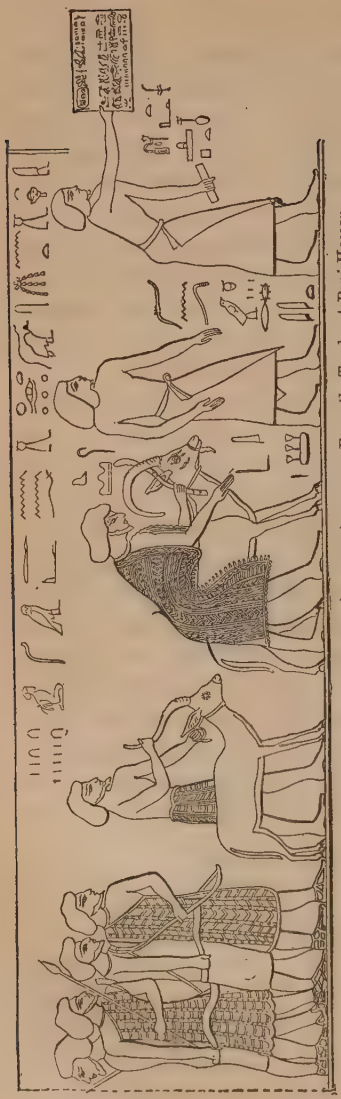
[2] See Canon Cook, *Speaker's Comment.*, vol. i. *Excursus on Egypt, etc.* Ebers' *Ægypten und die Bücher Mose's*, p. 256, places the arrival of Abraham before the time of the Hyksos.

villages, the former adorned by great temples and palaces, of which the ruins still excite wonder. A richly cultivated land would ere long open on all sides. Then, as now, the creaking of the great water-wheels, turned by oxen, would proclaim the source of the universal fertility, as they poured far and wide over the fields, through innumerable rivulets and wider channels, the life-giving stream of the Nile. Oxen dragging the plough or treading the corn, as the labourers sang at their work;[1] huge herds of cattle, or flocks of sheep; fragrant gardens, and rich orchards and vineyards, would vary the delightful picture with each hour's advance.

Nor would other equally pleasant details be wanting. The horse was as yet unknown,[2] but numerous and often beautiful asses served in its stead for all peaceful uses. The people, now of mingled blood, but originally of Asiatic origin,—a branch in fact of the same Cushites as founded the Babylonian kingdom,—were a quiet and happy race, though the lordly nobles and priests looked on the poorer classes with unconcealed disdain. Amidst all, however, the land, as a whole, rejoiced. Hospitality abounded, and if there were toil by day, the evening was cheered by the song and the dance; to the sound of the pipe and the harp. The usual dress was linen, coloured for the people at large, but pure white for the priests; that worn by the richer ladies being often too

[1] Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. ii. p. 43.

[2] This itself seems a proof that Abraham's visit was before the time of the Hyksos, who introduced the horse to Egypt. We find it there in Joseph's time and later (Gen. xlvii. 17, 18. Exod. ix. 3. Deut. xvii. 16). It was not introduced among the Hebrews till the reign of Solomon. Strabo (xvi. 784), says that the Nabathæans, even in his day, had no horses, and to the present time some tribes of Bedouins have never had any. Robinson's *Palestine*, vol. i. p. 343.

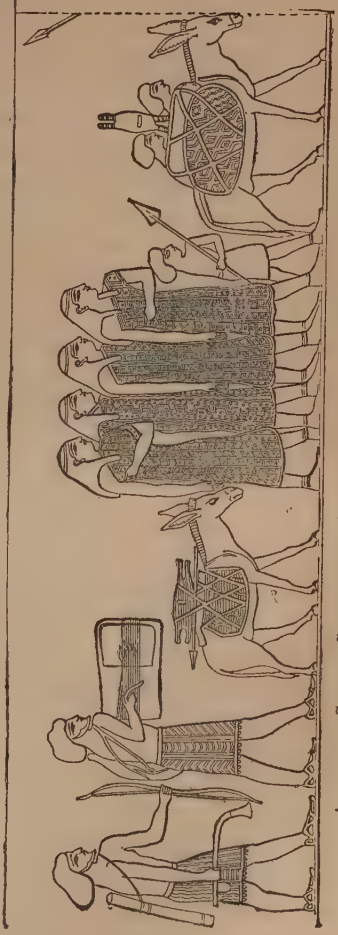


ARRIVAL OF SEMITIC STRANGERS IN ABRAHAM'S TIME. *From the Tombs at Beni Hassan.*

fine and transparent for modesty. The sportsman had his dogs, to hunt the crocodile or the hippopotamus; the fowler his trained cats, to take birds in the reeds, on the edges of the canals and of the Nile; over whose waters glided the light skiff, the heavy raft laden with huge stones for public buildings or with produce, and the stately barge of nobles or of the palace.

That Abraham should have appeared before Pharaoh has been thought by some critics improbable, but, strange to say, a written copy has been recovered of a formal royal permission to a shepherd tribe to settle in the northern Delta; granted by Menephthah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus. From it we learn that foreigners were always brought before the king on their arrival; to receive liberty to stay in the country,

or to be sent back. In the rock tombs hewn out of the steep hill on the east side of the Nile, half way between Memphis and Thebes, at the village of Beni Hassan, "the sons of Hassan," —an ancient Arab tribe long settled on the spot, —we have, moreover, a striking picture of the reception, by a great dignitary, of the representatives of a Semitic tribe exactly like Abraham's people, and that in the patriarch's own day; for the painting dates from his time.



ARRIVAL OF SEMITIC STRANGERS IN ABRAHAM'S TIME. *From the Tombs at Beni Hassan.*

The Amu,[1] or Semitic foreigners thus brought before us, are nomades, like the Hebrews, and have with them not only their wives and children, but their beasts and household effects, and even their arms; a sure proof of their political independence.

The details of the picture may help us to

[1] *Ebers*, p. 256.

realize the circumstances of the appearance of Abraham before Pharaoh. A court scribe ushers in the Amu chief, who wears a sack-like coat, reaching to the knees, in red, white and blue, elaborately bordered and fringed; with ornaments, in stripes and spots, throughout. He and his immediate attendant have removed their sandals, but the rest retain them. The chief leads an ibex, as a gift, bowing with outstretched hands as he presents it, and the next figure holds an antelope by a collar and by its horn. A third person follows, wearing only a kilt. Next come four men in long closed blouses suiting a hot climate; two of them white; two red, white, and blue, in fancy patterns. All the four carry their arms—a spear and bow, with what may be a weapon of bent wood, like an Australian boomerang, for throwing; or possibly, the crooked stick still used by Arabs in driving their camels.[1] An ass follows, with panniers; partly laden, it would seem, with bright coloured cloth, for which Canaan was famous; but also showing the heads of two children nestled in them. Four women without any veils, succeed, wearing the tight-fitting shirt which is still the single garment of Arab girls; the one side kept up by a shoulder strap, but the arms and the other shoulder bare. Their feet are set off by red ancle boots, edged on the top with white. All the figures seem bare-headed, but all have abundant hair; that of the women being bound round the crown by a fillet. A boy holding a spear and wearing a short sack goes before them, and a second ass, bearing a spear and what seems a shield, follows behind; the picture closing with two men, of whom the foremost plays on a large stringed instrument held out in front of him, and the other bears a bow and

[1] Similar throw-sticks are still in use among the Bescharu Arabs of Sinai. Bonomi, *Nineveh*, p. 136. But *see* p. 368.

quiver, and a club; their only clothing, apparently a tasselled fancy patterned kilt, reaching from the waist to the knees.[1] "I view them," says Lepsius, "as a migrating Hyksos family, who pray to be received into the blessed land, and whose descendants, perhaps, opened the gates to the Semitic conquerors, allied to them by race."[2]

That Pharaoh should have been attracted by the beauty of Sarah, and should have taken her at once into his harem, as narrated in Genesis, is a striking illustration of the exact keeping of the incident with historical truth. The court officials of the princes of the Nile valley seem to have been specially zealous in their efforts to secure beautiful women for their master. In the D'Orbiney Papyrus, there is an account of a faithless beauty whose sweet smelling locks are found in the room of the Pharaoh, and shown by the slaves to his wise men and scribes. They bring them forthwith to their master as "the locks of a daughter of the god Ra Harmachu," adding, "The blood of that god is in her;" on which the Pharaoh[3] does not rest till he has, with great difficulty, secured her; after which he makes her his favourite.[4] We find, moreover, in a papyrus preserved at Berlin, a story still more strikingly resembling this incident in the life of Abraham. A workman has had his ass seized by an inspector, and reclaims it before the head officer,

[1] See plate in Brugsch's *Egypt*, and in Ebers. The picture on the wall of the tomb is 8 feet long, and 1½ feet high. Ebers' *Ægypten*, pp. 257–8. *Speaker's Commentary*, vol. i. pp. 445-6.

[2] *Letters from Egypt*, English trans. p. 112.

[3] Pharaoh is not a proper name, but a title, like "the Czar," or rather like that of the Sultan—"The Sublime Porte"—that is, the "Lofty Gate." It means, literally, "The Great House, or, as we say, "palace," and is used on the monuments as equivalent to "His Majesty." *Ebers*, p. 264.

[4] *Papyrus D'Orbiney*, ix.

Meruitens, who in the end refers the matter to the king, a Pharaoh of the eleventh dynasty, and thus before the patriarch's time. After questioning the appellant, the king says, "He does not answer anything said to him. Let a written report be made to us: we comprehend the matter. Meanwhile his wife and children are the king's. Watch secretly over him and supply him with food." The wife and children become royal property, and the officers of the court undertake the maintenance of the husband, as was the case of Abraham.[1]

The gifts of Pharaoh to Abraham in honour of Sarah bear the same mark of intimate knowledge of the Egyptian world. They included, we are told, "sheep and oxen, and he asses and men slaves, and women slaves, and she asses, and camels."[2] That the horse should not be mentioned is striking, for no figure or mention of it appears on the monuments of the Old Kingdom of Egypt, and it seems, as already noticed, to have been first introduced by the Hyksos,[3] whom Abraham, therefore, would seem to have preceded. On the monuments of their age it is represented constantly. Long-eared sheep are seen as early as the monuments of the twelfth dynasty—that under which, in all probability, the patriarch visited Egypt. In a tomb beside the Great Pyramid, there is a painting and inscription stating that the dead man owned no fewer than 2,235 common sheep and goats, and 973 of a finer kind, in all 3,208.[4] Cattle have always been raised in great numbers in

[1] *Les Papyrus hieratiques de Berlin*, F. Chabas, pp. 14, 15.

[2] Gen. xii. 16. The words "he had," should be translated, "he had given him."

[3] *Ebers*, p. 222. *See* p. 359.

[4] *Ebers*, p. 266. *Viyouroux*, vol. i. p. 402. Lepsius, *Denkmäler* Abth. ii. T. iii. Blatt ix. 106, 132.

Egypt; for their bones have been dug up from a great depth in the Delta,[1] and the monuments show that from the earliest times they have been employed in the same way as at present. In an inscription of the twelfth dynasty, a functionary called Ameni boasts that he had collected in the nome of Sahou, of which he was prefect, a herd of 3,000 bulls with their heifers. The ox was the animal most commonly used for drawing the plough, and dairy produce played a great part in the food of the Egyptians and in their religious ceremonies. Diodorus relates that in his time 360 bowls were daily filled with milk as offerings, by the priests who celebrated the mysteries of Osiris.[2] Under the New Empire there were officials who had the inspection of the bulls and heifers of the domain of the god Ammon. The scribe Anna, whose tomb has been discovered at Qurnah, had the office—his epitaph tells us—of selling the dairy produce of that domain.[3]

The presence of numerous asses in Egypt is proved by the paintings of Beni Hassan, and by the still older tombs near the pyramids, on which whole herds of asses meet us. Rich men boast in their epitaphs of having had them by thousands. In later ages, indeed, the god Set, to whom the ass was sacred, was viewed as "the evil one," and his special beast consequently became "an abomination to the Egyptians:" but even after it had come to be hated, it was still much used for riding and burdens, though also sacrificed to Set by being thrown from the top of a rock. In the Egypt of Abraham's

[1] Lyell's *Antiquity of Man*, p. 41.

[2] Birch, *A Remarkable Papyrus of the Twelfth Dynasty*. Chabas, *Les Papyrus hieratiques de Berlin*, p. 47. Lepsius, *Denkmäler* Abth. ii. T. iii. Blatt ix. 75.

[3] Chabas, *Études*, p. 296.

day, however, it was an object of respect, as it still is in Africa, where, as Sir S. Baker tells us, it would be taken as a compliment rather than the reverse to be told that one "was an ass,"—so sprightly, intelligent and noble a creature is it in these regions.

The gift of camels to Abraham was long thought by hostile critics a proof of the late composition of this part of Genesis; but research has abundantly shown that the animal was known from the earliest ages in Egypt. It is not, indeed, represented on the monuments, but this must have risen from some of the numerous laws which restricted artists of those days to certain figures, drawn by fixed rules. Cocks and hens, which abounded on the Nile from the earliest times, and were even offered in sacrifice to the god Anubis,[1] are thus, in the same way, never found on any monument or in any painting.[2]

On his recovery of Sarah, Abraham was no longer permitted to remain in Egypt, but was conducted to the frontier wall, out of the country, by an Egyptian guard.[3] His stay in Egypt, however, while little flattering to his nobler traits, had added to his already great wealth, for he left it, with Lot, "very rich in cattle and in silver and gold." These metals were well known to the Egyptians of his day, but were as yet scarce in Palestine.[4] The silver mines of Egypt, in the Eastern desert,[5] enriched the country with both silver and gold, as did also the tributes from Ethiopia, Central Africa, and other countries.

[1] White and yellow fowls were thus offered. *Isis et Os.*, p. 61.

[2] The bones of dromedaries have been found in the deepest borings of the Nile mud. Ebers believes the camel to have been in use among the early Phenician colonists of the Delta coast. It is not an African animal, and must have been brought to the Delta from Asia.

[3] Gen. xii. 20.

[4] Chabas, *Etudes*, p. 109.

[5] *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. p. 240.

The use of silver even before Abraham is proved by the crown of a king of the eleventh dynasty, now preserved at Leyden. It is of gold and silver, the broad band being of both metals, the nobler one concealing the less precious. In the time of the twelfth dynasty gold was wrought into very fine ornaments, as is seen in the pictures of the Beni Hassan tombs. Amenemha I. had a palace which was richly gilded throughout; with arches of lapis lazuli, and walls crusted with precious stones and bronze. Towards the close of the Ancient Empire coffins were entirely gilded. Dr. Birch has shown that gold washing was followed in Nubia under Amenemha's reign.[1] The turquoise and copper mines of the Sinai peninsula are as old as the pyramids, and in the earliest dynasty we already meet official "overseers of the gold treasury." At a later date, indeed, in the reign of Rameses III., about 1200 B.C.,[2] there is a picture in the temple of Medinet Habu which shows the wealth of the Pharaohs as having become enormous. The treasury dazzles us with the display of gold and silver, in sacks, jars, or heaps, while commoner metals lie around in great masses like building stones.[3] If to this we add the golden chariots, chairs, and footstools, the golden doors and pillars, the vessels of gold, and the universal gilding of chambers, in the palaces of the Pharaohs of the New Kingdom, the royal wealth must abundantly have justified the words of one of the Pharaohs to a servant he wished to honour, that "he should wear gold round his neck, on his back, and on his feet, for having faithfully obeyed in all things."[4]

The two tribes of Abraham and Lot having no longer

[1] *On a Historical Tablet of Rameses II.* *Archæol.* p. 376.
[2] *Brugsch*, vol. ii. p. 140. [3] Dümichen, *Hist. Insch.*, 1867.
[4] Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, T. iii. 97.

permission to remain in Egypt, wandered back by slow marches towards Canaan, over the uplands of the Negeb or South Country, which was then much more fertile than now,[1] to their old encampment between Bethel and Hai. The removal of an Arab camp, to new pasture grounds, must present much the same scene in all ages, and hence that of a tribe which Layard[2] saw on the march must help us to realize the old world picture of the daily stages of Abraham and Lot. "We found ourselves in the midst of wide spreading flocks of sheep and camels. As far as the eye could reach, to the right, to the left, and in front, still the same moving crowd. Long lines of asses and bullocks, laden with black tents, huge cauldrons and variegated carpets; aged women, and men no longer able to walk, tied on the heap of domestic furniture; infants crammed into saddle bags, their tiny heads thrust through the narrow opening,—balanced on the animal's back by kids or lambs tied on the opposite side; young girls clothed only in the close-fitting Arab shirt, which displayed rather than concealed their graceful forms; mothers with their children on their shoulders; boys driving flocks of lambs; horsemen armed with their long tufted spears, scouring the plains on their fleet mares; riders urging their dromedaries with their short hooked sticks,[3] and leading their high-bred steeds by the halter; colts galloping amongst the throng; highborn ladies seated in the centre of huge wings, which extend like those of a butterfly from each side of the camel's hump, and are no less gaudy and variegated. Such was the motley crowd through which we had to wend our way for several hours." Omit the horses and you have a picture of the journeys of Abraham.

[1] Palmer, *On the Desert El Tih, Palestine Fund Reports*, 1870.
[2] Layard's *Nineveh*, vol. i. p. 50. [3] *See* p. 362.

CHAPTER XXII.

ABRAHAM'S SECOND RESIDENCE IN CANAAN.

ENCAMPING by the rude altar, which he had erected when formerly near Bethel, with Lot's tents not far from his own, Abraham soon found that increased wealth brought increased troubles. Disputes respecting the use of wells is a constant difficulty when more than one Bedouin encampment has to water its flocks from the same sources, and such strifes rose between the herdsmen of the two patriarchs. Moreover, the pasturage was insufficient for the sheep and cattle of both; and in short, it was advisable that uncle and nephew should part.[1] Nor could a finer illustration of the lofty and unselfish character of Abraham have been shown than that which marked his proposal that this should be the case. Though the whole country had been given him by God Himself, he waived his rights. "Let there," says he, "be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and

[1] When in 1863, the Beni Sakk'r tribe, which is under two sheiks, encamped in the Ghor, just before their raid on the plain of Esdraelon, their tents, like those of the Midianites, covered the ground for miles, as far as the eye could reach from Mount Beisan, and in a week there was not a green blade to be seen, where, before the arrival of these locusts, one stood knee deep in the rank herbage. Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 493.

between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen; for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

The features of the locality enable us to fix the very spot where this notable example of following the things that make for peace was uttered. Abraham had apparently built his altar on the summit of the "mountain east of Bethel," where he and Lot then stood, with all the land spread out like a map at their feet. The country around is now only a succession of brown and rounded limestone rocks, rising into bare hills, without a tree to cover them; but it may then have presented lovely park-like glades, as in Gilead, with open pasturage, shaded by well wooded slopes, stretching into the blue distance;[1] "northward, southward, eastward, and westward," in varied beauty. But the richest spot in the landscape, the circle of the Jordan, lay eastward, as it were at their feet; where the deep cleft of the river opened into a broad valley, before its waters finally lost themselves in what is now called the Dead Sea. If Sodom and Gomorrah lay in this northern part, they must have risen from amidst its rich verdure; the traces of which still remain, and at once attract the eye of any one looking down from the hills in the neighbourhood of Bethel. The abundant waters, which still gush from the high western plateau, even now support a mass of vegetation before they are lost in the light loamy soil. But utilized as they then were by irrigation, far and wide, they must have made every part of it, as seen by Abraham and Lot, a very garden of Jehovah—recalling the traditions of their own Eastern Paradise, or the glorious beauty of the scene

[1] Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 169.

they had recently left behind them at Zoan,[1] in Egypt —where the bountiful Nile, led everywhere through the thirsty soil, repaid the care by a fertility and luxuriance that had passed into a proverb.

Nor was natural beauty all. The Jordan cities lay on the great route of Eastern travel, and promised to the keen eye of Lot a rich market for the produce of his flocks and herds, as well as the luxuries and refinements of wealth. More worldly minded than Abraham, he chose this seductive region, forgetful that outward advantage may be bought too dear, if it involved injury, moral or spiritual. Choosing the rich valley, and with it the corrupt civilization which had developed itself fearfully amidst the temptations and influence of an Indian climate; he turned his face to the deep descent where this paradise lay spread out, some thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean; and, nomade like, pitched his tent outside the gates of Sodom. Abraham, on the other hand, forthwith received a new gift of the whole country from God, as if to mark how much higher in His sight is the gentle spirit that trusts to Him rather than to selfish plans of its own, like that of Lot.

But Hebron, not Bethel, was to be the chief resting-place of Abraham. It offered, on the wide open country round, free pasture; better suited for his flocks and herds, and more abundant. There, under the oaks of Mamre, with their grateful shadow from the noon-day heat, he once more pitched his tent, and near it, as was always his custom, built a third altar to Jehovah. The precise spot may perhaps be marked by the ruins of an ancient enclosure mentioned in Josephus, which still remains to

[1] Zoar in the English version is undoubtedly a misreading for Zoan, which is retained in the Syriac. Zoan was especially rich in irrigation.

the north of Hebron. "There," says the Jewish historian,[1] "stood the terebinth beneath which the patriarch received angels;" a tree as old, it is thought, as the world. It is said to have been burned down so recently as the seventeenth century, after having been an object of almost idolatrous honour for untold ages.[2]

Here, at last, he could rest, almost at home in this upland vale, with its mingled town and country life, its wells, and its clumps of terebinths; amidst the cool and delightful climate of an elevation of nearly three thousand feet above the sea.[3] If Lot had the tropical luxuriance of Sodom, Abraham had the refreshing breeze of the hills, whose soft slopes were sprinkled with stretches of grey olives, and picturesquely mingled groves of pomegranates, figs, apricots, and almonds; while round him spread waving patches of wheat and barley, varied by green gardens, and vineyards so famous, that the Jews believed the vine had been first planted by God's own hand on these fertile slopes. His flocks, moreover, had only to wander to the next heights, beyond this quiet retreat, to have before them unlimited upland pastures.

A strange disturbance of this pleasant region soon, however, broke its peacefulness for a time. The various kingdoms of the valley of the Euphrates and Tigris had long been the scene of stirring events. Great military conquerors had risen, one after another, since the time of Nimrod; until, in Abraham's day, a great empire under the kings of Elam—the mountainous district on the eastern side of the lower Tigris and Euphrates—stretched thence to the shore of the Mediterranean; a distance of nearly a

[1] *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 7, 9.

[2] *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 142.

[3] Hebron. Schenkel's *Bib. Lex.* Sepp's *Jerusalem und das Heilige Land*, vol. i. p. 594.

thousand miles, in a straight line, and of much more by the northern route which alone was practicable for armies. Chedorlaomer, or, as his name is given in the Septuagint, Kodorlogomer, the reigning king, belonged to a dynasty which, by a strange good fortune, has perpetuated its memory even to our times in the old Assyrian inscriptions. In these there is frequent mention of a great conquering line of kings of Elam, the house of the Kudurs,[1] each of whom appended to this common title some personal affix; that of the king mentioned in Genesis being the name of the god Lagomer, a famous divinity of Elam. Still more strangely, an inscription of the Assyrian king Assurbanipal, who reigned B.C. 667,[2] narrating his conquest of Elam and its capital, Susa—the Shushan of Esther—tells us that he then carried off an image of the goddess Nana, which had been taken from Babylon 1,635 years before, by an Elamite king, Kudurnanhundi, who had "laid hands on the temples of Accad," or Babylonia.[3] This successful invasion of Babylon must therefore have happened about B.C. 2300, a period earlier than Abraham's time, and strongly confirms the narrative of Genesis in reference to an Elamite empire. Still more, inscriptions have been found on bricks at Mugheir, the ancient Ur, of a Kudurmabuk, of Elam, whose empire extended over South Chaldea, and also over the "Westland,"—that is, according to the usage of the inscriptions, over Canaan,—his dominions consequently reaching from Susiana to the Mediterranean.[4] Thus the invasion of

[1] Kudur = in Assyrian to "service," "adoration." *Western Asiatic Inscriptions*, vol. ii. p. 65. It seems a Finnish word. The Ostiac-Samoyed equivalent is Kote—Kotö = servant.

[2] *Maspero*, p. 436. Schrader makes the date B.C. 650.

[3] Smith's *History of Assurbanipal* (1871), p. 250.

[4] Schrader, *Keilinschriften*, p. 48.

Chedorlaomer is virtually established as a historical fact, altogether apart from the testimony of Scripture. In its glory his rule stretched a thousand miles from east to west, and five hundred from north to south.[1]

Under this over-lord were various lesser kings, of whom we know little. Amraphel, "the son reigns,"[2] king of Sinear or Shinar, the ancient Babylon; Arioch, "the servant of the Moon,"[3] king of Ellasar; an unknown Mesopotamian town or district[4]—perhaps Larsam, the modern Senkereh, on the east of the Euphrates, between Erech and Ur.[5] Of this town and district, the inscriptions reveal the name of an ancient king Eriaku, or Urukh, perhaps this Arioch, or some ancestor, but it may be the famous "king of Sumir and Accad,"[6] lord of Ur, renowned as the great builder of cities, temples, and fortresses. A third completes the list. "Tidal," or rather as the Greek has it, "Thargal," the great chief[7] of "the Goim,"[8] apparently the "Guti,"—the Semitic tribes of Northern Mesopotamia, part of whom afterwards became the Assyrian[9] nation. An invasion of Canaan by Chedorlaomer fourteen years before had subdued the country to him and made it tributary, but after twelve

[1] The Egyptian monuments, in exact accordance with Genesis, state that before the conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews, and till the kings of the eighteenth Pharaonic dynasty, the ruling power in Western Asia was that of the *Rutennu* the peoples inhabiting Assyria. Under Rameses II., the Pharaoh of the Oppression, they no longer, however, held Canaan. The power had passed to the Khetas, or Hittites. Chabas, *Voyage d'un Egyptien*, pp. 318–322.

[2] Schrader. [3] Lenormant.

[4] Schrader, *Riehm*, p. 819.

[5] Lenormant, *La Langue Primitive*, p. 378.

[6] See p. 297. [7] Rawlinson, *Herod.*, i. 364.

[8] Goim = (in Heb.) Gentiles.

[9] Lenormant, *La Langue Primitive*, p. 376.

years subjection a general revolt had followed, the payment of the tribute had been refused, and it may be the commercial interests of the populations on the Euphrates threatened; the line of travel on which they depended running from the great river, through the revolted districts, to the gulf of Akaba.[1] In all probability Abraham was still in Harran when the first invading army marched northwards, on its way to the west, and would thus know all it implied when he now heard at Hebron that the Elamite king, with his vassals, had a second time marched into Palestine, to reduce the refractory chiefs once more to obedience.

Crossing the Khabour, perhaps at Arban; the Belik near Harran, and the Euphrates at Carchemish, the invaders would pass south, by Hamath in the Lebanon, and Damascus, to the territory of the rebels.[2] Sweeping on, along the east of the Jordan, to cut off the allies of the revolted kings, their first blow fell on the gigantic Refaim in their chief town—Ashteroth Karnaim—the sanctuary of Astarte, the goddess of the crested moon. The Zuzim, of Ham, on the eastern side of the Dead Sea,[3] apparently the same as the Zamzummim; and the terrible Emim,[4] at Shaveh Kiriathaim—the upland dis-

[1] Tuch, in *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Morgenl. Gesell.* (1847), p. 161.

[2] Tomkins' *Studies on the Times of Abraham.* An admirable *resumé* of all that is known on the period, from the Assyrian and Egyptian records. The illustrations are prepared with great care.

[3] There is still a Hameitat about six miles east of the lower part of the Dead Sea. The name is read Hemta in the Targums, so that the identity of the place seems established. Tristram's *Land of Moab*, p. 117.

[4] The name Emim means "the terrible race." They held what was afterwards Moab.

The Zamzummim seem to have owed their name to an imitation of what was regarded as their barbarous and unintelligible dialect.

trict of "the Twin Towns," somewhere near, were next attacked. Pressing still south, beyond the Dead Sea, by the valley now known as El Arabah, the miserable Horites, the "Cave men"[1] of the rough mountain range of Seir[2] presently felt the terrors of war. Marching thence, through a wild and broken country, the conquerors turned their faces to the west till they reached the "Oak of Paran,"[3] on the edge of the wilderness of that name; now the desert of El Tih, on the far south-

They held at least part of the country known as that of the Ammonites, on the east of Jordan. Their name comes from a verb, to "hum, to murmur, to make a noise." Fürst, however, thinks it means "the strong."

[1] That cave men lived then in Palestine seems to me to cast doubt on the assumption of a necessarily immense antiquity for the cave men of Europe. Strabo gives a curious account of this race, which was found as far west as Mauretania, and as far east as the Caucasus, but especially in Idumea and the coasts of Abyssinia. The women, he tells us, painted themselves with antimony; the men went about naked, or in skins of cattle, and carried clubs, spears, and shields. The wives were in common, except those of the chiefs, for the race had chiefs. All wore shells round their necks as a protection against witchcraft. Their food consisted not only of flesh, but of the bones and skin of beasts pounded up with it. Some were circumcised, like the Egyptians. But their treatment of the dead was at once the strangest and most revolting of their peculiarities, for they tied the corpse neck and heels together with twigs, and then pelted it with stones amidst shouts and laughter, till they had covered it up, when they laid a ram's horn on the cairn and went off. Their drink is said, by Strabo, to have been the mixed blood and milk of their cattle. Surely this state of degradation in historical periods makes any need of an immense antiquity to account for it in Britain and elsewhere, unnecessary.

Bertheau, *Geschichte der Israeliten* has an elaborate essay on the Horites, pp. 147 ff.

[2] Seir, means "rough," "rugged."

[3] Paran = the hollowed out.

west of Palestine. The countless wadys or dry water-courses hollowed out of the limestone uplands of that region, and giving it its name, were then, however, far richer in fertility and population than now; for nothing is more certain than that the destruction of trees, and the long neglect of irrigation, has since those ages changed the extreme south of Palestine into a literal wilderness, where before there were vineyards, and a settled population.[1] Turning now once more to the east, having reached the limits of their march, the victorious allies came to En-Mishpat, "the spring of judgment," called also Kadesh, "The Sanctuary;" apparently the seat of an ancient oracle, and also the chief encampment of the Amalekites, whose whole country they wasted with fire and sword. Next came the turn of the Amorites, whose chief seat was then at Hazezon Tamar, "the groves of palms," afterwards Engedi, "the fountain of the kid;" a small oasis on the western edge of the Dead Sea, 1,300 feet below the high plateau of Southern Judea, over which the invaders had marched to reach it. And now the enemy had at last almost entered the rich circle of the Jordan, and had only to strike north to reach its wealthy cities and towns:—Sodom, "the walled"; Gomorrah, the town in "the cleft";[2] Admah, "the strong place";[3] Zeboiim, "the town of the gazelles"; perhaps in flattery of its maidens; and Zoar, "the small." There was no chance of escape nor any hope of again, in Tyrian fashion, buying peace by renewed tribute. The population must meet their invaders and fight for their hearths and lives. Each town had its king: Bera, "the gift of God;" Birsha, "the strong"; Shinab, "the glorious"; Shemeber, "the proud,"[3] and under them their people,

[1] Palmer's *The Desert of the Tih. Palestine Fund Reports*, 1870.

[2] *Fürst.* [3] These are the meanings given by Fürst.

came out to battle on the broad plain at the head of the Dead Sea,[1] but only to be utterly overthrown. The ground was full of bitumen pits, that may well have broken their ranks. Bera and Birsha were killed, and the scattered remnant of the force, with the whole population that could, fled to the eastern hills, while the victors sacked the towns and carried off much plunder and many prisoners; among whom were Lot and his family. Painfully remounting the 1,300 feet of cliff on the west of the valley, at the gorge of Engedi, or passing up the line of the Jordan on its eastern side, the conquerors had now only to march home in triumph, laden with spoil and rich in captives. But meanwhile the news of his nephew's misfortunes had reached Abraham at Hebron. As the head of a great tribe, he was on a footing of equality with the kings around, and, though a man of peace, he had all the fire of the Arab when the occasion demanded. This, the fate of his kinsman instantly roused. Calling to his help Mamre, "the manly," Eshcol, "the brave,"[2] and Aner, "the branch," Amorite chiefs with whom he lived on terms of friendship, they joined their contingents to his levy of three hundred and eighteen trained guards of his own encampment; and the whole, numbering likely over a thousand men, started instantly in pursuit of the retiring foe, who had reached Laish, afterwards known as Dan, on the east side of the Jordan, some thirty miles north of the Sea of Galilee, before they were overtaken. With keen military instinct Abraham had determined on a night surprise; trusting, no doubt, to the carelessness of an Eastern army, which takes little precaution against

[1] Vale of Siddim = Valley of the Broad Plains, lying then, as now, north of the Dead Sea.

[2] So Hitzig, "all the man"; Dillmann prefers "the grape cluster."

such attacks.[1] No news had reached Chedorlaomer of the pursuit, and his men lay, some asleep and some drunk, says Josephus,[2] when Abraham—dividing his force into sections acting from different points, like those of Gideon's band, centuries later, in a nearly similar case; or the Chaldeans in their attack in "three bands"[3] on the camels of Job—rushed on the great camp, causing an instant panic which soon became a complete rout. Nor did Abraham give them time to rally, but pressing on, chased the fleeing hordes towards the range of Anti-Libanus, for two days, as far as Hobah, north[4] of Damascus, till they were utterly scattered.[5] Lot and his family, with the other captives, were thus recovered, with all the plunder taken on their great raid by the invaders.

Returning slowly southwards, rich with the plunder of the camp, and with a long train of rescued Canaanite prisoners of war, Abraham was met by two princes of the country, at some spot known as the King's Vale; perhaps among the uplands of Ephraim,[6] whither the march must have led as it passed on through Shechem, towards Hebron. The one was the new king of Sodom, who came, doubtless, to do homage to his deliverer as the great man of the day, for Abraham's victory had raised him above any of the local chiefs. He had acted only from friendship to Lot, but by the laws of

[1] Even at this day the Bedouins have no sentinels nor outposts. Burckhardt's *Notes on the Bedouins*, vol. i. p. 303.

[2] *Ant.*, i. 10, 1.

[3] 1 Sam. xi. 11. Job i. 17.

[4] The English version says "on the left hand of Damascus," but the left in Hebrew means the north, for position was reckoned among the Hebrews with the speaker facing the east. Thus, in Job xxiii. 9, "left" and "right" mean north and south. See p. 242.

[5] See a vivid picture of this rout in *Land and The Book*, p. 215.

[6] *Dillmann*, p. 253.

war the whole booty was his; though he might have been expected to restore the captives recovered to their owners or homes, instead of retaining them as his personal slaves. Such an arrangement the king of Sodom now pressed on him.[1] But he misunderstood the magnanimous nature with which he had to do, for Abraham had undertaken his great task with no ulterior thoughts of gain. "I have lifted up my hand," and sworn "unto Jehovah," said he, "the most high God, the framer[2] of heaven and earth, that I will not take so much as a thread or the thong of a sandal,[3] lest thou shouldst say, 'I have made Abraham rich': save only that which the force have eaten, and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; let them take what is theirs." Abraham would have nothing to do with Sodom except to render it a service.

But the chief personage who thus came out to welcome the victorious patriarch was one round whom legend has delighted to gather. Melchizedek, the king of righteousness,[4] ruler of Salem, "priest of the Most High God," who appears in this incident for a moment and then

[1] If any one recovered from an enemy the goods of a friend, they were the property of the conqueror—a hard enough law, which Abraham was above enforcing for himself, though he stood on its letter as regarded his confederates. Michaelis, *Mosaisches Recht*, vol. iii. p. 252.

[2] Not "possessor," as the English version has it.

[3] De Wette's translation. Roberts says it is still a Hindoo saying for having taken nothing, that one has not taken even a piece of the thong of a worn-out sandal. It is also an Arab proverb. Ges., *Thes.* p. 452.

[4] Or "justice," as Kalisch translates it. It is curious to notice that in Joshua's time the king of Jerusalem bore the name of Adonizedek, "the lord of righteousness." Is this a ground for believing that Salem must have been Jerusalem?

suddenly vanishes, has in all ages, alike from his name, which itself commands respectful awe; his office and faith at such a time, and in such populations; and the silence observed respecting his origin or history, been a favourite subject for speculation. We know neither his parentage, nor the place of his birth, nor his successor in his office and dignities, and hence he offers a striking type of our divine Lord.[1] It is quite possible that, like Abraham, he may have been one of the early Pilgrim Fathers who had left Chaldea, to escape the growing bitterness and intensity of idol worship, which were making fidelity to the faith of purer ages impossible.[2] His name and that of the place over which he ruled, are purely Semitic, and may thus point to his belonging to the clans of that race beyond the Euphrates.[3] But this seems a questionable ground, since the Phenicians, and at least some of the Canaanite tribes, spoke a language almost, if not quite identical with Hebrew, while the tribes beyond the Euphrates spoke Aramaic. Indeed, Abraham's ability to mingle freely with the peoples around him, seems to imply that on entering Canaan he abandoned his native speech and adopted theirs, making Hebrew for the first time the speech of his race.[4]

Melchizedek's pure and holy faith in the "Most High

[1] The Jews, ever fond of the marvellous, affected to regard Melchizedek as a son of Shem—a relic of the long perished golden age of the world.

[2] Chap. vii.

[3] So, Kalisch.

[4] Bunsen, *Bibel Urkunden*, vol. i. p. 102. Eichhorn's, *Einleitung* vol. i. p. 59; ii. p. 1. Kalisch's *Bible Studies*, vol. ii. p. 3. It is curious to notice that after having adopted the Hebrew of the Canaanites from Abraham's day, the Jews went back to their original Aramaic, and gave up Hebrew, as soon as they were carried off to Babylon, Abraham's early land.

God" was doubtless a relic of the anciently universal recognition of the One Creator, and is one of the proofs incidentally afforded in such other cases as that of Abimelech, king of Gerar; Jethro, the Midianite; Balaam, from the mountains of Assyria; and Job, the Arab; that God has at no time left Himself without a witness even in lands secluded from the direct privileges of His people. El Eliōn, the name given by Melchizedek to God, was not indeed new or unknown, for El or Il, "the Mighty One," was the ancient supreme god of the Semitic races of Babylonia, and was known in Palestine by the Phenicians; and even the great title, Eliōn, "the Highest," had been adopted by them, corrupt and idolatrous as they had already become. With them, indeed, both names only marked one divine Being among many, though perhaps the highest; nor is it to be overlooked that while Melchizedek uses the general expression "the Most High God," Abraham, in repeating it, prefixes the personal name Jehovah;[1] as if to claim for Him the exclusive right to supreme divinity. With this weighty addition, though not without it, he recognises the God of Melchizedek as Him whom he, himself, worshipped.[2]

But not only is Melchizedek a king, he is also the first

[1] Gen. xiv. 22. Cohen, *Darstellung des Gottesdienstes*, p. 21, notices this.

[2] Most critics are of opinion that Salem was Jerusalem; but it has been fancied by some that a place eight miles south of Scythopolis, where John the Baptist laboured, is intended. Jerome tells us that, in his day, the so-called palace of Melchizedek was still shown there. Abraham had certainly to pass by Scythopolis on his return, and hence Salem may have been the seat of Melchizedek's rule. Winer gives striking reasons for preferring Jerusalem. Gesenius thinks Salem, not Jerusalem, was the place. *Thes.*, xiv. 22.

who bears the ancient and sacred, but often much abused name of "*Priest.*" The office had not yet been separated from that of king, and, indeed, in after ages it was still nominally applied to the sons of David,[1] and even to humbler personages in the court of Solomon;[2] but in these cases tradition seems to have retained a title which though once real in similar connections, was now simply one of dignity. From Melchizedeck, Abraham accepts a priestly blessing. The highest earthly one in the land, bowing before a still higher spiritual, and recognising in him the servant of God, expresses his gratitude for the signal mercies just vouchsafed him, by giving to God, as represented by His priest, the first tithes of which we read—"the tenth part of all the spoil"—an act which became an authoritative historical precedent among his descendants ever after. Even Jacob, at Bethel remembered it,[3] and Moses put it in practice as a public law, that the tenth of the field, the orchard and the herd[4] should be given to the priests, as to God; besides a tribute from all booty of war.[5]

Ten years had passed since Abraham had entered Canaan, and he was still without an heir, when Sarah, acting on the custom still common in the East, gave one of her female slaves to her husband as a concubine, or wife of secondary rank; with the design of adopting as her own the children of the union.[6] From among the

[1] 2 Sam. viii. 18. The word "priest" is supposed from the phraseology of the parallel passage, 1 Chron. xviii. 17, to mean here "the first at the king's hand," that is, in rank.

[2] 1 Kings iv. 5. "Principal officer" is literally a "priest."

[3] Gen. xxviii. 22.

[4] Lev. xxvii. 30 ff.

[5] Num. xxxi. 31. 2 Sam. viii. 11. Chron. xxvi. 27.

[6] Jacob's wives did the same, Gen. xxx. 1 ff. The old law of Israel (Ex. xxi. ff) even gave the Hebrew maiden sold by her

slaves brought from Egypt, perhaps given by Pharaoh, one Hagar was selected for this honour; but the result, as too often happens in polygamous countries, was unhappy. Even before a child was born, jealousy sprang up in the mistress towards the maid, who fled to the desert to escape Sarah's anger, and only returned when divinely warned to do so. But the son whom she presently bore—Ishmael, "God hears"—was after a time followed by a son borne by Sarah herself, who, of course, at once took the place of the son of the concubine, as Abraham's heir. Some fifteen years had passed, during which the now disinherited lad had been the acknowledged successor to his father's rank and wealth; and it was not easy either for him or his mother to sink at once into insignificance, and resign the distinction they had so long enjoyed. Heart-burnings naturally followed, and in the end, Sarah would not be contented till both mother and lad were sent away from the encampment, to join some other tribe, and return to Abraham no more. To us it seems strange that the mother of his first-born son should be thus treated; but it has always been the rule in the East that the elevation of a female slave to be a secondary wife or concubine, in no degree affects her servile position; and leaves her children slaves to her owner, like herself liable to be sold away or sent off at a moment's notice, though this is seldom done.[1] In this case, moreover, Hagar was Sarah's property, and would be treated by her as such. Yet it was no slight task to bring Abraham to carry out her will, nor would she apparently have gained her point, had not the patriarch been divinely warned that what seemed to be only harsh

father on account of his poverty, a claim on her purchaser, to be made either his own concubine or that of his son.

[1] Michaelis, *Mosaisches Recht*, vol. ii. pp. 125, 352,

jealousy, was in reality in accordance with an all-wise Providence. Even then, however, he rose up early in the morning, as if fearful that his obedience to the heavenly counsel might fail if he delayed; and, doubtless with a heavy heart, sent mother and son away. Weaning feasts are still usual in the East, and that of Isaac had been the occasion of this final rupture.[1] It led to Ishmael becoming the father of the wide family of Bedouin tribes, afterwards known as Ishmaelites; who ultimately spread over the desert, from the eastern edge of Egypt to the north-west coasts of the Persian Gulf, and also over the Hauran, east of the Jordan, to Lebanon, —that is, as a whole, over all Northern Arabia.[2]

The disastrous end of the cities of the plain had happened before this breach in the patriarch's circle. The agencies by which it was brought about, and the situation of the doomed towns, have been equally disputed. It is certain, however, that the present Dead Sea is of immensely greater age than the time of Abraham, for it belongs geologically to the oldest seas in the world; its origin reaching back to the period of the Secondary Rocks, when a great part of Southern Germany and Switzerland was as yet below the ocean. Its level stood formerly much higher than now, for ancient beaches

[1] Isaac may have been three or four years old at his weaning, if not older. The child Samuel must have been some size when, on his being weaned, his mother took him to Shiloh and left him there (1 Sam. i. 24). If Isaac was older, weaning must have had a different meaning than it has with us. The Mahometan law prohibits a woman weaning her child before it is two years old, except with the consent of her husband. The mother, in 2 Macc. vii. 27, says she has suckled her son three years. In India a child is weaned only after three years. See *Winer*, art. Kinder.

[2] *Riehm*, art. Ismael.

are still to be seen on the rocks three hundred feet above its present surface. Whether it ever joined the Red Sea is disputed: some think it did; others adduce in disproof, the facts that the waters of the Arabah, or gorge south of the Dead Sea, flow into it from a water-shed almost midway between the two seas, and that the Gulf of Akaba on the Red Sea, is thirty-five feet higher than the Mediterranean, while the Dead Sea is thirteen hundred feet below it.[2] It seems most probable that the whole Jordan valley, from Lebanon to the Red Sea, was once a branch of the Indian Ocean, which has been drained and cut off by the subsequent elevation of the country.

The Dead Sea is, in fact, an almost unique phenomenon. Its surface is, as I have said, amazingly depressed below the sea-level, but it lies in a bowl or cauldron itself thirteen hundred feet deep at its lowest point. The edge of this bowl, however, reaches only to two-thirds of its length from north to south, and the depth of the other third is, in great part, no more than thirteen feet. Its lower end is thus, in reality, the edge of the deep bed; hidden by only a few feet of water. The hills on its west shore are of Hippurite[3] limestone; a rock of the chalk formation, in which, as in Syria, layers of bitumen, fluid and solid, occur; and also, of rock salt. The whole of the hills, indeed, smell of bitumen, and the chalk marl is so thoroughly impregnated with it at some places that it burns fiercely when kindled. This is especially the

[1] Fraas.

[2] Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 285.

[3] Hippurite is the name of an extinct fossil shell, not unlike a straight horn. Some are a foot long; most very small. In South France and in the Alps it forms almost the entire substance of widely spread and very thick rocks. Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, viii. p. 283. Nicholson's *Palæontology*, vol. i. p. 453.

case between Engedi and the north-west corner, where the shore is lined with a mass of bitumen in which pebbles of all kinds are thickly imbedded.[1] The eastern shore rests throughout on sandstone which, however, at some places is pierced by huge veins and beds of volcanic rock.[2] The chalk of the west shore reappears only atop of these two; so complete has been the dislocation or "fault" of the two sides, through primeval earthquakes or other convulsions. A tongue of land formed of the debris brought down from the hills, in the course of ages, by torrents, juts out into the lake for two-thirds of its breadth, on the south-east, and marks the beginning of the shallow water.

The Dead Sea has been immemorially a mere reservoir for the waters of the Jordan, and of the mountain torrents which flow into it. The former, alone, discharges into it not less than six million tons of water every twenty-four hours;[3] yet the evaporation, from the direct heat of the sun and the reflected heat of the rocks, keeps the balance comparatively even through the year. In winter, indeed, the surface is two or three yards higher than in summer, but this makes little difference in the extent of the sea, except at its shallow southern end. At that part, Gebel Usdum, a huge mountain of rock-salt, capped by gypsum and marl, about seven miles long, and from one-and-a-half to three miles broad, hollowed out by rains and springs, sends a constant addition of brine to the lake; and this, with that which enters it in other parts, has gradually made it more than six times salter than the open ocean.[4] Hence nothing living can exist in it. The fish carried down by the Jordan at once die, nor can

[1] Tristram, *Land of Israel*, p. 277.
[2] Basalt.
[3] Fraas, in *Riehm*, p. 972.
[4] The ocean has 4 per cent. of salt; the Dead Sea, 26¼.

even mussels or corals live in it; but it is a fable that no bird can fly over it or that there are no living creatures on its banks. Dr. Tristram found on the shores, three kinds of kingfishers, gulls, ducks, and grebes, which, he says, live on the fish which enter the sea in shoals and presently die. He collected one hundred and eighteen species of birds, some new to science, on the shores, or swimming or flying over the waters. The cane-brakes which fringe it at some parts are the homes of about forty species of mammalia, several of them animals unknown in England, and innumerable tropical or semi-tropical plants perfume the atmosphere, wherever fresh water can reach. The climate is perfect, and most delicious, and, indeed, there is, perhaps, no place in the world where a sanatorium could be established with so much prospect of benefit as at Ain Jidi (Engedi). There are many spots near the lake where freshwater streams flow throughout the year, and where sweet water bubbles up within a few feet of the salt shore. The rich plain of the Safieh, at the south-east corner of the lake, is cultivated for indigo, maize, and barley, to within a few feet of the water's edge, and the date palm still waves over the mouth of the Arnon and Zerka.[1] The waters of the lake are, in fact, only salt by being saturated from the great salt mountain of Usdum, at the south end.[2]

[1] Canon Tristram in *Daily Telegraph;* also fully, *Nat. Hist. of the Bible*, pp. 12, 380.

[2] Canon Tristram, noting that Engedi, had—as the former name Hazezon Tamar, implies—groves of palms in Abraham's day, and that these groves were famous even down to the Christian era, says that on breaking through the limestone incrustation of the recesses of the rocks there, he found great masses of perfect palm leaves, and even whole trees, petrified where they had stood. Clumps of date palms still flourish in the small oases on the east shore of the sea. *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 380.

The basin of the Dead Sea is in keeping in its peculiarities with the whole course of the Jordan, "The Descender," which feeds it. In sixty miles, its constant twistings make the actual length two hundred, and for the whole distance it flows far below the surface of the neighbouring country, through a mere fissure torn in the rocks by volcanic force at some remote period. Issuing from Lake Merom at a level of ninety feet above the Mediterranean, it enters the Lake of Galilee at a level of 300 feet below it, and rushes thence, in a gloomy and deep chasm, from ledge to ledge, down twenty-seven rapids till, at the Dead Sea, it is, as has been said, 1,300 feet below the Mediterranean, and 3,000 below the streets of Jerusalem.

The position of the cities of the plain has been much disputed. In the opinions of Mr. George Grove, Canon Tristram, and others, it must have been north of the Dead Sea; in the "circle" in which, afterwards, stood Jericho: but others look to the south end of the lake as the true spot. They urge that the "Vale of Siddim" is said to have been full of bitumen pits, and that though none are now found around the shallow part of the lake, masses of it rise to the surface after earthquakes,[1] as if the soil of the bottom were still largely impregnated with it. The Bedouins, indeed, who now frequent the springs and pastures on the shores, trade at Jerusalem in the salt of the lake and in the bitumen which they fish out of the waters or pick up on the shores. The fields of Sodom, moreover, were well watered and fruitful as a garden of the Lord, and Robinson tells us that a whole series of permanent brooks and streams flow into the lake at the south end, where the level surface especially favoured

[1] Canon Tristram says he gathered some very large fragments. *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 24.

irrigation. Dr. Thomson,[1] believing that the cities stood at the south end of the lake, says, that in summer the southern plateau is covered with only three feet of water and is waded across in all directions, though in winter the depth of the water is thirteen feet. He argues from this that the plateau may have been dyked off in the days of Sodom, and that its submergence at all rises only from the destruction of these dykes, with perhaps a slight subsidence of the land. He thinks, moreover, the lake was fresh till the waters overflowed the southern end; but this seems impossible when we remember that the ancient beaches, showing its former levels, stand over 300 feet above its surface.

On the other hand, Major Wilson, of the Palestine Survey, agreeing with Mr. Grove, Canon Tristram and Lieut. Conder, in thinking that the cities were to the north of the lake, writes thus:—"In Gen. xiii. 1–12, there is an interesting account of the parting of Abraham and Lot, at the camp of the former, between Bethel and Hai, now represented by Beitum and a mass of ruins called Et Tell; and in close proximity to these two places there is a hill from which a commanding view of the plain north of the Dead Sea is obtained, and on which are the foundations of a very old church, possibly marking the site of Abraham's altar. The position of Abraham's camp must, at any rate, have been in the immediate neighbourhood; and as it is hardly possible for any one to read the account without feeling that Abraham and Lot were actually looking down on Sodom and Gomorrah, when 'Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan,' it follows that those cities must have been situated on some part of the plain north of the Dead Sea and visible from the heights of Bethel."

[1] *Land and Book*, p. 632.

He adds that "the plain or 'circle' of Jordan could not have extended beyond the point where the river enters the Dead Sea," and quotes the statement that Lot journeyed east, "which would have led him far away from the southern end of the sea."[1] He accounts for the disappearance of all traces of the cities to their being gradually buried under the *débris* of the western hills, washed down by the winter torrents, so as gradually to raise the level of the lower plain till it forms "a flat expanse of half consolidated mud."[2] It may be added, that whether the cities were at the north or at the south end, the smoke of their destruction would be visible from the camp at Mamre, where Abraham was when the catastrophe took place—but if they were at the south, there is no depression of the hills to aid the view, whereas, there is a dip in the range towards the north end, over which the smoke would be easily visible.[3] A hill, however, is still pointed out among the many summits near Hebron, as that from which Abraham looked into the deep gulf which parts the mountains of Judea from those vast, unknown, unvisited ranges, which, with their caves and wide tableland, invited the fugitives from the plain below.[4]

As to the causes of the catastrophe, opinions have been no less divided than on other points. Josephus, expressing no doubt the belief of the ancient Jews, ascribes

[1] *Biblical Educator*, vol. iii. p. 359.

[2] Conder, *Pal. Explor. Fund. Rep.* (1874), p. 39.

[3] Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 365.

[4] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 47. Ewald (vol. i. p. 450) thinks the cities stood at the south end of the Dead Sea and attributes their overthrow to an earthquake. The name Usdum certainly sounds like Sodom. But Canon Tristram's arguments, stated at length in *The Land of Israel*, p. 364, seem to make it certain that the doomed cities were at the north end.

it to lightning,[1] and a striking legend found in the Assyrian mounds seems to favour the idea of a terrible thunderstorm accompanied by a flood.[2]

An overthrow from the midst of the deep[3] there came
The fated punishment from the midst of heaven descended.
A storm, like a plummet, the earth (overwhelmed).
To the four winds the destroying flood burned like fire.
The inhabitants of the cities it caused to be tormented; their bodies it consumed.
Freeman and slave were equal, and the high places it felled.
In heaven and earth like a thunderstorm it had rained; a prey it made.
A place of refuge the gods hastened to, and in a throng collected.
Its mighty (onset) they fled from, and like a garment it concealed (mankind).
They (feared) and death (overtook them)
Their feet and hands (it embraced)
Their body it consumed.

On the other hand, a writer so calm and scientific as Furrer[4] thinks that an earthquake was the especial cause. "In the vicinity of the whole region," says Fraas,[5] also, "along the line of such a deep chasm, subterranean movements are constant, and necessarily lead to changes of the level of land and water, that is, to volcanic appearances in the widest sense of the word, which produce frightful earthquakes. Thus Tiberias was destroyed by one so lately as 1837. The Dead Sea is not volcanic in the strict sense, as is shown by the regularity of the strata of limestone, though pieces of brimstone of the size of walnuts are found on the shores at some places, and though there are strong hot springs at various

[1] *Bell. Jud.*, iv. 8, 4.
[2] *Records of the Past*, vol. xi. p. 117. Translated by Prof. Sayce.
[3] Deep = the abyss of the firmament—the waters above it. *Sayce.*
[4] Schenkel's *Bibel Lex.*, vol. iv. p. 155.
[5] *Aus dem Orient* (1867), p. 78.

points on the east side, one of them, at least, smelling strongly of sulphur." But the presence of lava at many places near the Sea of Galilee, and in the Ledja; with the wild irruptions of volcanic rocks on the east side of the Jordan and of the Dead Sea itself, are enough to show that forces lie hidden beneath, which at any time may show themselves? The Bible account is very simple and striking. "The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire out of heaven, and overthrew them and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground." This seems to imply a terrible storm of lightning and tempest; but we may well suppose that an earthquake added its terrors. Fire from above might kindle the layers of asphalt with which the plain abounded,[1] and tremblings of the ground might aid the storm-flood in overwhelming everything. There is no geological reason against believing the shallow part of the lake a result of the catastrophe, for a slight subsidence of the ground, such as often happens elsewhere, would at once submerge it. The whole district, in fact, before the terrible visitation, must have been very like that of Baku on the Caspian Sea; where numerous fissures in the earth pour out liquid bitumen, while others give off inflammable gas which burns permanently when lighted—some parts, indeed, so freely, that it is only necessary to insert a pipe in the earth, and set fire to it above, to have light and heat forthwith.[2] No wonder that when Abraham, in the morning after the awful night, looked towards the once smiling valley, "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace."

[1] Tristram, *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 25.

[2] Rosenmüller's *Das Morgenland.* Dillmann's *Genesis*, p. 251.

The reward of Abraham's lofty trust in God might have seemed complete, on the birth of his long-promised heir—Isaac—twenty-five years after the migration from Harran; when all hope of such a blessing seemed past. But the fine gold was to be tried once more, to prove its quality beyond a question. He had gone out not knowing whither, at God's call; he had lived as a stranger in Canaan, believing the promise that it would hereafter be his inheritance, while as yet he had no child; year after year his trust had been unshaken, though realization of his hopes seemed humanly impossible. But a son had at last been given him in his old age, and had grown up to youth, in visible fulfilment of the long-delayed assurance. The ideal of faith had not, however, yet been reached; there might be something still wanting of absolute, unconditional obedience to God's will: some compliance too great to be demanded. The nations round thought nothing too sacred or beloved to keep back from their idols; was Abraham capable of equal self-sacrifice?

From the earliest ages the desire to please the Divine Being had led men to carry to extremes the institution of sacrifice, originally, in all likelihood, appointed by God Himself. From offering lambs and oxen they had gradually reasoned themselves into the hideous thought that the more precious the offering the greater its acceptableness, and had thus introduced the practice of presenting human victims. The old Accadians, or early Turanian inhabitants of Chaldea, had already adopted it, long before Abraham.[1]

"In the month Sivan," says an old Accadian inscription, "from the first day to the thirtieth, an eclipse failed (and) the crops of the land were not prosperous.

[1] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. iv. p. 25.

When the God of the air (the atmosphere) is fine, (then there is) prosperity. On the high places the son is burnt."

Another says :—

"He gave his offspring for his life
The head of his offspring for his own head;
The front of his offspring for his own front,
The breast of his offspring for his own breast."

The Canaanite races, at least those of Cushite origin, not to be behind the earlier people, had adopted from them

HUMAN SACRIFICE. FROM "L'EGYPTE—ANTIQUITÉS."

this terrible rite, and had brought it with them from the Euphrates to Palestine. To make their "children pass through the fire," "to offer up their sons and their daughters;" and "to give their firstborn for their transgressions; the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul" had become, we know not how early, a dreadful characteristic of their religion. On the altars of Ammon and Moab, of Egypt and of Phenicia, as afterwards on

those of the distant Punic settlements in Carthage and Spain, the highest expression of the spirit of sacrifice found satisfaction only in the burning alive of children by their parents. Nor was the awful custom without its dark influence even on the chosen people, as in the fate of Jepthah's daughter, the sacrifice of Saul's sons at Gibeah, and the terrible scenes in the valley of Hinnom, under the walls of Jerusalem, where, in the days of Ahaz and Manasseh, it became for a time established.[1]

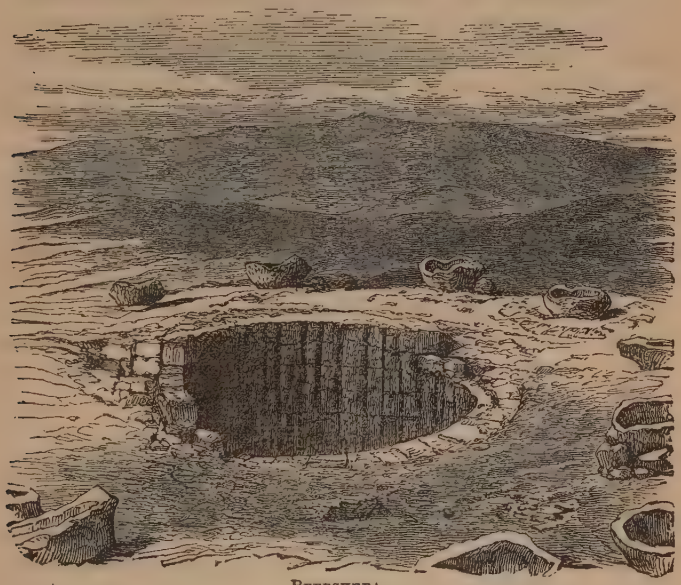
The final and crowning trial, which was to test whether the self-surrender of the patriarch was equal to such sacrifices as the nations around him made to their idols, came to him in his tents at Beersheba[2]—a camping place on the pastoral uplands of the south country, twelve hours south-west of Hebron, and thus on the extreme limits of Palestine. The two springs which attracted the patriarch to the spot, and in after ages made it the centre of a considerable population, still rise in two deep wells sunk sixty feet into the limestone rock, at 300 paces apart, and built round with stone. The top is now worn into deep ruts by the ropes used through thousands of years, for drawing the clear and delicious water, for camels, herds, and flocks, as well as for the use of man. Round the well stand stone troughs of great age, to assist in the supply of the thirsty cattle.[3] The grove planted by the patriarch, not of ilex or terebinth, which never descend into these wild plains, but of the light feathery tamarisk, the first and the last

[1] 2 Kings xxiii. 10. 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; xxxiii. 6.

[2] "The Well of the Oath." It may also be translated, "The Well of the Seven (Lambs)," but the idea is the same; for the seven lambs were the offerings to confirm, as with an oath, the agreement made. To "seventh it" was the expression for swearing an oath. *Michaelis*, vol. vi. p. 147.

[3] Sepp, *Das Heilige Land*, vol. i. p. 637.

tree which the traveller sees on his passage through the desert, and thus the appropriate growth of the spot, has long since vanished, but it was from beneath its growing and delightful shade that he and Isaac set forth on their sad journey.



BEERSHEBA.

From Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," by permission.

The scene of Abraham's trial is spoken of as "the land of Moriah," an expression which has given rise to great dispute, for the only Moriah known is the hill which Solomon afterwards consecrated as the site of the temple, and it is not elsewhere used as a name for any district round. Jerusalem, moreover, has been thought too near Beersheba to suit the description of the journey as one of three days. It has hence been thought that a spot

near Shechem, the place consecrated by the first altar Abraham raised in Canaan, is meant.[1] It is urged that there is no mention in Genesis of a Mount Moriah, and that the only place besides the present in which the name occurs is in the book of Chronicles, which is confessedly of a later date.[2] Of Moreh, at Shechem, on the other hand it is said that we read in Judges of the Hill of Moreh,[3] that is, "the Teacher," and of its oak or oaks, under the broad shade of which Abraham first pitched his tent,[4] and built an altar, and where he was favoured by a vision of Jehovah. In the Samaritan Pentateuch it is spelt Moriah, while the Greek version translates it "the high land," from an etymology, implying "lofty," or "exalted." Among all ancient interpreters, moreover, Mount Moriah at Jerusalem finds favour only with the Jerusalem Targum, which naturally sought to glorify the temple hill.

Yet not a few cling to the belief that this opinion is right. There, it is said, Abraham had exhibited his great deed of faith and obedience, there his only offering was presented of which we have a record, though he built various other altars. Thus, it is urged, the sacred hill where the Covenant God was afterwards to dwell, and where alone His people could present their offerings, received its consecration, already, in Abraham's time.[5]

[1] See the argument for this stated at length by Bleek, in *Studien und Kritiken* (1831). Lieut. Conder seems to favour Bleek's view. "The Temple Hill," he says, "is not visible until within a half mile of it: Gerizim is seen 'afar off' from the maritime plain, within fifty miles of Beersheba." *Pal. Explor. Fund. Rep.* (July, 1880), p. 173.

[2] 2 Chron. iii. 1. [3] Judges vii. 1. [4] Gen. xii. 6. Deut. xi. 30.

[5] Abram. Riehm's *Handwörterbuch.* Gesenius also thinks it was Moriah, quoting Josephus, *Ant.*, i. 13, 1. He gives the etymology of Moriah, adopted by the sacred writers, as "Mori Jah," the chosen of God. Compare 2 Chron. iii. 1, which Gese-

Canon Tristram, indeed, appears to settle the question by the stubborn evidence of the distances of Gerizim, or Moreh, and Moriah, from Beersheba, respectively. "Travelling at the ordinary rate of the country," says he, "Jerusalem would just be reached on the third day (as required by this narrative) from Beersheba; to reach Nablous (Moreh) in the same time *is impossible*, at the pace of fellahin with their asses."[1]

The terrible drama was permitted to continue till the proof was complete and triumphant, that the patriarch's faith was equal to any strain, and that nothing could shake his trust in the Divine word, even should it be necessary, as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews expresses it, that "God should raise up Isaac from the dead."[2] But, before the literal victim could be offered, the true purpose and spirit of the trial were shown, in the final and fatal act being arrested. Abraham's unconditional submission, and his readiness to complete the sacrifice, were accepted instead. Henceforth it was proved that the lonely follower of Jehovah was not behind the servants of Chemosh or Baal in self-surrender to his God. But it was also taught that, while the God of Abraham had a right to demand even such a sacrifice as that of an only son, a limit was fixed to the impulse in man to offer his costliest and best, and a sacredness stamped on human life. The highest devotion authorized was to be symbolized only by the offering of lower creatures, not of human beings; the life of the creature being regarded as accepted instead of that of the offerer. Thus, the solemn lesson was taught, no less vividly than before, that sacrifice was no mere outward act, but an awful confession

nius translates, the hill Moriah, which was pointed out to David (in a vision). *Thes.*, p. 1246.

[1] *Land of Israel*, p. 154.

[2] Heb. xi. 19.

of guilt and exposure to wrath, as well as an atonement or expiation. On the one hand the great principle was proclaimed that the sacrifice of self was the highest and holiest offering that God can accept; and on the other, the inhuman sacrifices, towards which the ancient ceremonial was perpetually tending, were condemned, and cast out of the true worship of the Church for ever.[1]

His son given back to him, as if from the dead, the spot became memorable, not to the patriarch alone, but to all ages, as the scene of a great lesson. Henceforth the name Jehovah Jireh was given to it—the Lord will provide—but to this the sacred author appends a Jewish proverb, which illustrates, in the variety of interpretations given it, the difficulty of understanding fully the sententious expressions of remote antiquity. "In the mountain the Lord will provide," that is, "as He had pity on Abraham, so He will have pity on us," says Dean Stanley. "In the mountain of the Lord, He appeareth," say Tuch and Delitzsch. "On the mountain where Jehovah appeareth, let us praise Him," says Ewald. "On the mountain of the Lord one shall be seen as a worshipper," says Kalisch. "On Mount Moriah God provides for men and sends them help; as He of old did to Abraham, so He does to us now," says Gesenius.[2]

It is striking to notice the echoes of this great event in ancient heathenism. Among the Phenicians it was told

[1] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, p. 49. Rev. F. W. Robertson (*Notes on Genesis*, p. 55) remarks:—"Abraham lived in a country where human sacrifices were common; he lived in a day when a father's power over a son's life was absolute. He was familiar with the idea, and just as familiarity with *slavery* makes it less horrible, so familiarity with this, as an established and conscientious mode of worshipping God, removed from Abraham much of the horror *we* should feel.

[2] Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1246.

how Israel, king of the country, having an only son, whose mother's name was Anobret, "the Hebrew Fountain," on occasion of a great national calamity, adorned him royally and sacrificed him on an altar which he had prepared.[1] Among the Greeks Agamemnon prepares to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia, who, however, is delivered at the last moment by the goddess Diana providing, in her stead, a hind.[2]

From the scene of this great victory of trust in God, Abraham returned to his camping place at Beersheba; in after times, from being the last inhabited spot on the edge of the desert, regarded as the southern frontier of his descendants. Why he should have left Hebron is only matter for conjecture. It may have been to be nearer his flocks and herds, to which the wells of Beersheba offered the priceless advantage, in these wild regions, of abundant water. Or, can it have been that he might be nearer Ishmael, his firstborn son, thrust out from his father's home by the imperious bearing of "the princess" of the tribe; who would brook no rival to Isaac in her presence? Or was it the revival in Abraham, in his old age, of the Bedouin love of the open desert, far from the haunts of men? In any case, Beersheba continued for many years the centre of patriarchal life, for Isaac lingered near it long after his father's death,[3] and Jacob returned to it after his exile.

Thirty-seven years had passed since the birth of Isaac,[4] and Sarah had attained the great age of a hundred and twenty-seven, when death overtook her at Hebron,[5]

[1] Kenrick's *Phenicia*, p. 228.

[2] Euripid., *Iph. Aul.*, 783. [3] Gen. xxvi. 23.

[4] Compare Gen. xvii. 17, and xxiii. 1. Isaac's marriage took place three years after Sarah's death, Gen. xxv. 20.

[5] The name of Hebron is given in this passage as Kiriath Arba.

apparently while the patriarch was for the time away at Beersheba, among his flocks, perhaps little dreading such a calamity. It would seem, indeed, as if part of the tribe still remained there, Beersheba being, as it were, an outpost in the midst of the desert pastures, which Abraham occasionally visited. Nothing could be more touching in its simplicity or more true to the age, than the picture of his bearing under his new trial, and of the incident attending the burial of the dead. He comes at once to "mourn for Sarah and to weep for her," prostrating himself in his grief before the lifeless form long so dear. But the hot climate necessitated speedy interment, and he therefore "stands up from before his dead," and summons the men of the town; which it appears was a little republic, managing its affairs by representative elders; to buy from them in perpetuity, a resting-place for his wife and afterwards for himself. If, as Prof. Sayce thinks,[1] the Hittites were a branch of the Northern Kheta, we can picture to ourselves the group, who in Eastern fashion, met Abraham outside the town gate,[2] dressed in loose gowns like those of the Assyrians, reaching the ancles, their beards long and their hair curled. Compliments pass, in oriental style. Abraham is made welcome, as a great man, to choose any of their sepulchres;[3]

But Arba is the Accadian numeral, four, and as the Accadian and Babylonian gods had numerical symbols, it is thought that the god Sarru-ikder, whose number was four, may have been intended by it as applied to Hebron, which would thus mean "the city of Sarra-ikdu." The habitual concealment of the Divine name in the East, and the fact that there are various cities called Arba, seems to favour this interpretation.

[1] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. p. 28.

[2] Gen. xxiii. 18.

[3] An Arab gives his house, field, horse, to-day as in Abraham's time, to an intending buyer, and appeals to witnesses that he does

a gracious, though perhaps only a formal courtesy, which Abraham acknowledges, like an Arab, by bowing low. But he is too much a man of the world to leave such a matter so loosely, and in strictly Eastern fashion, which transacts even a marriage through third parties, asks their mediation with the owner for the legal purchase of the cave of Machpelah and the field in which it stood. These, in the end, he formally buys for four hundred silver shekels, duly weighed out; as money still is in China, and as it was till lately in India, to secure its being due weight,[1] and thus current with the traders of the town. All this, moreover, is done in public, before the gate, that the attestation of eye-witnesses may not be wanting; written documents not being as yet in use, in these parts, in such cases.[2]

The cave thus bought four thousand years ago, lies on the east edge of Hebron, where an ancient Christian church, built over it, is now turned into a mosque, which the Turks guard sacredly against any intrusion. Even the Crown Prince of Germany and our Prince of Wales could gain entrance only to the upper storey, where there is next to nothing to see; the cave lying underneath, hidden from all eyes. The mosque is a right-angled

so. But it is none the less known that this is only a form to help him to raise the price in the end. "What is that between me and thee," is still a standing phrase on such occasions, as it was 4,000 years ago.

[1] To weigh money was a Chaldean custom as well as a Canaanite. The very words are the same in Assyrian and Hebrew. Shekel = sicle = weight; as pondus = weight = pound. Rawlinson's *Cuneiform Inscriptions*, vol. ii. p. 113.

[2] All the men of the place gather round contracting parties at the gate of an Eastern town or village, the usual place of assembling, and take part in the transaction, finally acting as witnesses to it. A bargain thus confirmed is indisputable.

building, about 200 feet long by 115 broad, and consists, in its lower part, of gigantic marble-like bevelled stones, some of them 12 feet long and 5 feet in breadth; one, indeed, being no less than 38 feet in length. This portion is the most ancient and the finest relic of Jewish architecture, for it dates from the early Jewish ages, and remains a proof of the jealous care taken by the Hebrews of the graves of their venerated fathers.[1] The cave itself, as its name tells us, is double,[2] one rising over the other, divided by an artificial floor; the upper one alone being ever entered, and that only by the chief minister of the mosque, for prayer, in any time of special public calamity.

An outside stair leads up to a floor above the level of the caves, and on this are raised empty tombs, as monuments to the illustrious dead who lie far below. Each is enclosed within a separate chapel or shrine, closed with gates or railings; those of the tombs of Abraham and Sarah, of silver. The shrine of Abraham is cased in marble, and contains a so-called tomb, raised about six feet high, and hung with three carpets, embroidered with gold. The "tombs" of Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Leah are also shown, but are much like that of Abraham, though less rich. No men are permitted to enter the "tombs" of the women.[3]

Only one European, Pierroti, an Italian architect in the service of the Sultan, has ever seen more than the floor of the upper chamber, with its six tawdry erections,

[1] Furrer's *Palästina*, p. 86. *Land and Book*, p. 580.

[2] Machpelah = double. M. Pierroti has proved that it is really a double cave.

[3] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 495. Rosen, *Die Patriarchengruft zu Hebron*, passim. Guerin, *Description de la Palestine*, vol. iii. pp. 214–256.

placed there in accordance with a practice usual in Mahometan sepulchres. Pierroti, daringly pressing after the chief Santon or priest of the mosque, when he was entering the lower storey on a special occasion, found the entry was by a horizontal door in the porch. First a carpet, then a grated iron door, was lifted; after which a narrow stair appeared, cut in the rock. Undeterred by blows and violence, he managed to descend this far enough to see into the lower cavern in a northern direction, and to notice sarcophagi of white stone; the true tombs of some of the illustrious dead, in striking corroboration of the statement of Josephus, that they were of fair marble, exquisitely wrought.[1] There can be little doubt, indeed, that the remains of the three generations of patriarchs and their wives, Rachel alone excepted, still lie safely in this their venerable sepulchre.

Abraham, now left alone, was fast becoming a very old man, for he was a hundred and thirty-seven when Sarah died; and it was all important to get a fitting wife for Isaac, that heirs to the promise, nine times confirmed by God, should not fail. Slowly but surely everything had hitherto helped on its fulfilment—the separation of the patriarch from his father's house and from idolatry; the seal of circumcision, setting him and his for ever apart from the nations around; the birth of Isaac; the sending away of Ishmael. Isaac was clearly the chosen of God, but it was all important that his future wife should be of his father's stock,[2] and not an idolatrous Canaanite, and no less so that he should not leave the country which God had given him as an inheritance.

[1] Pierroti, *Machpela* (Lausanne, 1869), p. 93. Jos., *Ant.*, i. 14.

[2] They always marry in their own tribe, not allowing any member of it to marry into another. Seetzen, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. iii. p. 22.

Calling therefore his head slave, the most confidential of his servants,—perhaps Eliezer—he tells him all his mind, and commissions him to set out for Mesopotamia, "Aram of the two rivers," to the old home of the tribe, to seek a bride; but first requires him to swear an oath with a form used by Jacob long afterwards[1] and still common among Arabs, to act strictly according to his master's commands. It seems as if Abraham had not expected to live till his return, for he gives him full power to carry out the whole matter in every detail.

Taking ten camels, for himself and those who went with him; for the necessaries of the road, the gifts to be presented, and the use of the bride on the return; the trusty messenger sped forthwith on his long journey, past Damascus, then east to the Euphrates, and south to Harran, "the city of Nahor." There, Arab like, he makes his camels kneel outside the town, beside the spring always found close to Eastern cities or encampments, and, indeed, fixing their locality; and waits, for it is towards evening, till the women and maidens come out, as they still do, to draw water overnight for their household needs.

Devout, as became the servant of such a master, he commits the whole matter to God, praying that the courtesy of the appointed damsel might be the providential hint to guide him. Presently the daughters and the wives of the town gather round the well, and among them a maiden fair to look on—her pitcher on her shoulder—as was still long afterwards the custom with the Hebrews, and as is universal with Arab women still. A

[1] Gen. xlvii. 29. The meaning of this form has been much discussed, but the best explanation seems to be that it had reference to an implied responsibility to posterity for the fulfilment of the oath. Buxtorf's *Lex. Tal.*, p. 680.

friendly request for some water receives her kindly answer, and even an offer to draw water for the camels as well; for the daughters even of sheiks were wont to do this office for their father's flocks and beasts, as in the case of Jethro's daughters in Midian. The sign that had been asked seems granted; the appointed one must be before him. Taking a golden nose-ring and two golden armlets, he puts them on her, in acknowledgment of her politeness, asking her parentage, and whether he can lodge at her father's. Then comes the intimation that she is Nahor's grand-daughter, and, thus, directly of Abraham's kindred, and with this, the assurances of entertainment as wished, for both himself and his camels. Hastening home to the women's part of the house, she shows the golden gifts and tells the story, in the hearing of her brother Laban. Always keen and grasping, the sight of gold quickens his hospitality, and running to the well, he presses the stranger to return with him. He had prepared the house, he said, and made room in the yard for the camels.

The great beasts ungirded, fed, and littered, water is provided for the washing of the stranger's feet and those of his men—a first duty of hospitality, where, sandals only being worn, the heat and dust make such refreshment unspeakably grateful. Food is then set before him. But he cannot taste it till his errand is told. From politeness he had not been asked either respecting himself or his master. Now, however, he repeats all that Abraham had said to him, word by word, adding that the damsel who had acted so courteously to him at the well was assuredly the bride intended by God for Isaac, and concluding by a direct and business-like request to know whether he might have her for him. Rebekah herself is not consulted, for, in the East, the consent of the maiden

is never sought; her marriage is settled by others for her. Father and mother must agree to the betrothal, but it is also necessary that Laban sanction it;[1] for daughters cannot be married among Arab tribes, even now, except with the approval of their brothers, and Laban was not the man to stand back in a matter involving money. Bethuel, the father, keeps in the background, therefore, throughout, leaving his eager pushing son to settle the matter; but both parents forthwith give a ready consent to the match. "Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." The whole transaction was thus settled within perhaps an hour of the arrival at Harran. The sight of the ten camels, and of the golden presents for so slight a courtesy as Rebekah had shown, were arguments too strong to admit of hesitation in the answer.

Thanking God once more, with lowly prostration on the earth, nothing now remained but to seal the betrothal by the customary gifts to the bride elect, and by paying the purchase price for her to her brother and mother. Forthwith, therefore, gold and silver ornaments, so dear to maidens, and costly clothes, are brought out and handed to Rebekah, as from her future husband; for such gifts were demanded by custom from bridegrooms on their betrothal, to make the agreement binding. To Laban and his mother equally precious gifts are also presented, as the price paid for the maiden, and all is arranged without Rebekah being consulted. Nothing remains but to take her to her future distant home.

Eager to carry back the news of his success, the faith-

[1] Gen. xxxiv. 11. When the father lived in polygamy, full brothers had great authority in reference to their full sisters; more even than their father. The case of Dinah at Shechem further illustrates this. Michaelis, *Mos. Recht*, vol. ii. p. 98.

ful envoy next morning presses for leave to set out on his return. But the whole matter is only a few hours old; will he not stay a few days, to let the bride bid farewell to her father's house? It is left to Rebekah herself to decide; and she, cold and strong-willed, eager to enter on the new life which glittered before her, only too readily agrees to leave at once. An Arab wife has no outfit, for her husband provides all she needs, and so she mounts her camel forthwith, and leaves her father's house for ever, with the stranger whom she had first met only overnight. Yet she must start in a way befitting the daughter of a wealthy sheik. Her nurse, still an Arab woman's companion and cherished friend, must go with her, and she must take some slave-girls also, as her dowry. Thus accompanied, the camel specially brought from Beersheba for her use, and doubtless provided with a bridal throne in gaudy Eastern fashion, bears her off; and she moves away amidst good wishes, culminating in the dearest to an Eastern woman's heart, that she may be the mother of countless descendants, who should hold the gates—that is, the towns—of their vanquished enemies.

Isaac, now forty years of age, always gentle, had apparently remained unmarried till now, to please his mother, with whom he had lived till her death. Still feeling her loss, over three years before, he had gone out to the open downs near his father's tents, in the cool evening; perhaps in a meditative mood, perhaps only to look after his men and his flocks. It was in the neighbourhood of the spring, called, long years before, by Hagar, Lahai roi, "the Spring of the Living One who sees me,"[1] for a camp was always, as I have said, near a supply of water. Suddenly Rebekah appears in the distance, and as she comes near, alights from her camel on seeing a man,

[1] Gen. xvi. 14.

as custom still demands in the East, to do him reverence. But the stranger is no other than Isaac, and she veils her face as she learns the fact; for the husband must not see his bride till they are finally alone. The servant's story reveals the rest, and the tent of Sarah, now long without a mistress, receives a new one; Isaac's wife.

From the marriage of Abraham with Keturah in his old age, there sprang, we are told, six sons, who became the fathers of as many Arab tribes. But, like Ishmael, these possible rivals of Isaac were not allowed to remain with the heir of the great promise; receiving gifts from their father, they were sent away to the open lands which invited them on the east. No more is recorded of the patriarch but his death, and his burial beside Sarah in the cave of Machpelah; Isaac and his peaceful shepherds, joining with Ishmael, and his warlike followers from the desert, after long separation, as chief mourners, both equally honouring their common father.

Abraham's character merits the tribute paid it in all ages. Its strength is seen in the choice of Jehovah as his God when all around were idolators, and in his grand loyalty to Him amidst every temptation. Neither disappointment, nor delay, nor the strain of the sternest demands, for a moment shook his faith. Knowing Him in whom he believed, he trusted Him with an immoveable confidence. Nor was his bearing less worthy towards his fellow men. Though the elder, he gives the choice to Lot when the two must part; willing, for peace and kindliness, to take contentedly what his nephew leaves. He is too magnanimous to claim the spoil which war had made his, after the defeat of the kings, but renders the great service freely, without reward. If Hagar and Ishmael live ill at ease with Sarah, they have no such feeling towards him; for they knew how unwilling he had been

to send them away, and must have seen how the heart clung to them, which broke out in the fatherly prayer, "O that Ishmael might live before thee." The pity even for the unworthy that marks his intercession for Sodom is a lesson for every age. His bearing to the three mysterious strangers under the oaks of Mamre is the ideal of patriarchal courtesy and hospitality. He runs to meet them, and bowing low, begs them to let him entertain them, and himself hastens the meal.[1] That he should have maintained relations so friendly with the races among whom he lived at Shechem, Bethel, and Hebron, speaks for his prudence, integrity, and neighbourly worth. No wonder that his descendants, regarding him at once in his relations to God and to his fellow men, should speak of him as "incomparable in his generation," or that they have fabled of him, that, in Jeremiah's day, when the temple had been destroyed, Abraham's form was seen over the ruins, his hands uplifted, pleading with God for the sons of his people led off to captivity.[2]

[1] Each part in this picture is true to Arab life. The washing of the feet is the first act of politeness shown to guests, and indeed was so even in ancient Greek life (*Odyss.*, vi. 207), and is still so among the Hindoos. Bread is prepared each day by fire on a rock till it is heated enough to bake in a few minutes the thin cakes in use, or on an iron plate, or on a fire of wood or dried camel's dung. The greatest sheik thinks it no dishonour himself to run to the herd for a lamb for his guests, and to kill it with his own hands, while his wife is kindling the fire and preparing to make the meal ready. As to the quickness with which the slain calf was cooked, Arabs and all eastern peoples constantly cook the creatures they have killed for food, immediately after death; the hot climate requiring this. See Rosenmüller's *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 71. Hanna, in *Bib. Educator*, vol. i. p. 42. *Vigouroux*, vol. i. p. 437. *Land and Book*, p. 446.

[2] Beer's *Leben Abraham*, p. 88.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ISAAC AND HIS SONS.

IT is strange to think what a great part the descendants of the Chaldean shepherd, Terah, have played in the history of the world. Those of Nahor gradually formed a great kingdom which only passed away before the rising power of Syria and the fierce attacks of Edom.[1] The twelve tribes, sprung from Ishmael, scattered themselves over the vast pasture and desert regions of Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, the shores of the Persian Gulf, and the east of the Jordan. The sons of Keturah, in the same way, grew into similar tribes, to whom the desert solitudes have ever since been the chosen home. The Arab race, indeed, over the world, are the posterity of Nahor and Abraham. Nor have they been without their great part on the stage of the world, for it is to an Arab that more than 200,000,000 of men look to-day as the great prophet of God, and the empire they founded in the first days of Mahometanism stretched from India to the Straits of Gibraltar, and by its culture and civilization prepared the way for the revival of Letters in Western Europe.

But the supreme interest of mankind centres in the Hebrew, not in the Arab descendants of Abraham.

[1] *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 445.

Isaac, his heir, is at once a counterpart of his great father in simple devoutness and purity of life, and a contrast in his passive weakness of character; which, in part at least, may have sprung from his relations to his mother and wife. After the expulsion of Ishmael and Hagar, Isaac had no competitor, and grew up in the shade of Sarah's tent, moulded into feminine softness by habitual submission to her strong loving will. It is quite in keeping with such a history that Isaac mourned her for years after her death, and was diverted from his grief only by his marriage. No sorrow in the East is greater than that of a son for his mother, and Isaac, an only child, clung to his with all the tenderness of a soft and dependent nature.

The choice of Rebekah as his wife was dictated at once by the desire of the Arab race to keep the blood of their tribe pure, and by Abraham's determination to separate his posterity, as the chosen people of God, from the idolatrous Canaanites. But she can hardly be regarded as an amiable woman. When we first see her she is ready to leave her father's house for ever at an hour's notice, and her future life showed not only a full share of her brother's duplicity, but the grave fault of partiality in her relations to her children, and a strong will which soon controlled the gentler nature of her husband. Married at the age of forty, Isaac presently surrendered himself to her influence, as he had hitherto done to that of his parents. Her name, "The Enchainer,"[1] may indeed, have been a tribute to her charms, but it equally expressed her relations to her husband. Wholly devoted to her, in an age when Abraham and Jacob alike had concubines, and notwithstanding her childlessness for

[1] Literally, "the noosed cord," *i.e.*, the mancatcher.

twenty years, the pair have always been the Hebrew ideal of chaste married life.

No career could have been more uneventful than Isaac's; but it shows at least, that a path of modest retirement may honour God as much as one of prominent action. So quiet and unenergetic, that his whole life was spent in the circle of a few miles; so guileless, that he lets Jacob overreach him rather than disbelieve his assurance; so tender, that his mother's death was the poignant sorrow of years, and that in his blind old age he must have Esau kiss him when he came near; so patient and gentle, that peace with his neighbours was dearer than even such a coveted possession as a well of living water dug by his own men; so grandly obedient, that he put his life at his father's disposal; so firm in his reliance on God, that his greatest concern through life was to honour the Divine promise given to his race; so devout in his unwavering loyalty to the faith of Abraham—it is easy to understand why even our Lord's authority is vouchsafed for his having passed from earth to heaven at his death.

Of Ishmael, his half-brother, little is told us. From his childhood till he was a grown lad he had been regarded as the future chief of his father's tribe. The pride and delight of Abraham, who was over eighty when this his first son was born, he doubtless had been caressed and flattered by old and young. But the birth of Isaac had in a moment disinherited him, and left both him and his mother once more the mere personal slaves of Sarah, now their bitter enemy. That Hagar had lost her head at her elevation as the mother of Abraham's only son, was natural; and doubtless she fancied herself far above the childless Sarah in his regards; but to both, the change must have been terrible when banished from the encampment. Nor was there anything to soften the

blow. Keturah's sons, at a later time, were sent off with a gift of flocks and herds, but Ishmael and his mother had no more than a skin of water and some bread.

Hard as it must have been to Abraham thus to send away his first-born, it must have been harder still for both mother and son to be thus turned adrift in the desert, to make their way to some friendly tents; and it is no wonder that the remembrance of their sufferings, before they found such a refuge, glowed in the heart of the lad. Embittered at the insult to his mother, and at his own wrongs, he henceforth proudly cast off all relations to his father's tribe, and from the heir expectant of a quiet pastoral encampment, grew up into the mere wandering Arab, relying on his bow and spear, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him.

Circumstances, indeed, made this natural. The open sweep of the desert fanned the love of its wild freedom into a passion; forced him to depend on the chase for his living; exposed him to danger from hostile tribes and from beasts of prey; and the dull sense of wrong, withal, kept him aloof from mankind, except when he swooped down on the passing caravan, or the unsuspecting encampment, for plunder.

Yet the simple shepherd life amidst which he had grown up, must have been early adopted by him and his people in a measure; for we find the Hazeroth, or "circles" formed by the tents of a tribe round its flocks, among the characteristics of his family.[1] But he had little taste for a peaceful life. As in Esau's case, the wilder side of Arab nature was strongest in him, and his bent must always have been towards stir and adventure rather than quiet and unexciting employments. In boyhood and

[1] Gen. xxv. 16. The word is wrongly translated "towns."

early youth the darling of Abraham, he had become self-willed and impatient of restraint. High spirited and fond of listening at the watchfires of his father's herdsmen, to their stories of feuds and encounters with hostile neighbours at the wells, or with the freebooters of the desert; he had early become enamoured of the excitement of border life on the open wastes. The chase of the gazelle or the wild goat, and the more dangerous pursuit of the bear or the leopard, had doubtless in early youth inured him to exertion and adventure, and the taste for it clung to him through life. His aptest emblem was to be the wild ass of the desert,[1] that no man can tame and that scorns the multitude of the city,[2] and delights in the far off pastures of the wilderness.

Of his future history little is told. To separate him finally from Abraham's tribe, Hagar sought out for him an Egyptian wife; a countrywoman, therefore, of her own. As the great emir's son he would doubtless be received with consideration by the tribe he joined, and would soon find himself at the head of retainers of his own. Tradition speaks of his having married a daughter of the sheik of his new encampment; and the desert was already the home of many bands of nomades, with some of whom he no doubt formed alliances.[3]

When Abraham died Ishmael was a man of nearly ninety and had long been a great desert chief. He reappears for a moment, and only once, at the patriarch's burial, at which Isaac and he met once more. It must have been a striking scene when the two brothers, so long separated, united to pay the last honours to one equally dear to both, and showed in their doing so their high sense of his worth. Isaac, with his hundreds of household

[1] Gen. xvi. 12. The angel says he will be "a wild ass man."
[2] Job xxxix. 7. [3] Gen. x. 25–30.

slaves; Ishmael, with his troops of wild retainers and half savage allies, in all the state of a Bedouin prince, gathered before the cave of Machpelah, in the midst of the men of Heth, to pay the last duties to the Father of the Faithful, would make a notable subject for an artist.

A few isolated notices sum up all that is known, besides, of this strange wild figure of old times. Sons and daughters, born from different wives, grew into great clans, and even into powerful states; like that of the Nabathæans, who, four centuries before Christ, made Petra the capital of a wide kingdom; and that of the Ituræans, who, hereafter, were to dispute with Moses, on the east of the Jordan, for the possession of the Hauran. A strange fate linked the fortunes of Esau, the outcast of Isaac's household, with those of Ishmael, the outcast from that of Abraham, in the marriage of the future father of the Edomites with Mahalath, "the lyre," Ishmael's daughter, to humour Isaac and Rebekah's wish for marriage into the same stock. Ishmael was then an old man of a hundred and fourteen, but he lived twenty-three years more. We hear nothing more of him, however, than that, at last, he wandered farther east than any of the encampments of his sons or daughters.[1] The Ishmaelites, indeed, gradually spread from the Red Sea to the Euphrates.[2] Over these wide desert spaces

[1] The phrase "he died in the presence of all his brethren" (Gen. xxv. 18) should rather be as in the text. Naphal, "to fall," "to die," translated "died," means also to "set oneself down," "to dwell." The word translated "before," means here, and in Gen. xxiii. 17, "to the east." In Deut. xxxii. 49, the same phrase is translated "over against," but it should be "east of."

[2] *Ant.*, i. 12, 4. Genesis describes the limits of the Ishmaelites, as extending in open villages and encampments (translated "towns and castles," ver. 16) from Havilah, apparently on the African coast, as far south as Bab el Mandeb, to Shur, *east*

they have roamed, the same in every age. "No one of them," says Ammianus Marcellinus, writing in the fourth century of our era, "ever lays hold of a plough, or plants a tree, or seeks food from tilling the soil. They wander continually, roaming through wide tracts, without a home, without fixed dwellings, without laws. Nor do they ever stay long under the same sky, or rest satisfied long with any district. Their life is spent in constant movement."

Jacob and Esau, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah, born twenty years after the marriage of their parents, when Isaac was sixty, present a striking contrast, alike in character and ultimate fortune. Esau is frank and generous; Jacob, crafty and mean. Freehanded, light-hearted, and careless, the shaggy energetic hunter shows off for a time to far greater advantage than the plodding, quiet, astute dweller in tents.

But a closer study of the whole lives of the two does not support this earlier estimate. In Jacob, we have a struggle against baser elements of character, gradually resulting in the triumph of the nobler; in Esau, the original good darkens, as he grows older, into overmastering evil. Nothing seems to be wanting to depreciate Jacob. He outwits his brother, deceives his father, and seems to make a bargain even in his prayer. He is more than a match for Laban in craft, and returns Esau's impulsive friendship, when they meet, with cautious distrust. At Shechem, he thinks only of the possible injury to himself that may follow the treachery of his sons, and is silent as to their crime; and even when on the point of going to Joseph, he is suspicious and wary to the last.

Yet, with all these abatements, his life, seen as a whole,

of (not *before*) Egypt, in the direction of Assyria; that is, in Northern or Stony Arabia, including Petra. Gen. xxv. 18.

stands in a far higher light than that of his brother. If Esau arrest our interest at first, with his wild rough spirit, the type of a man of the field—his bow, his arrows and his spear his delight—hastening to chase the antelope at his father's desire, and bring home venison for his pleasure; if we cannot but sympathise with him in his "great and exceeding bitter cry," "Bless me, even me also, O my father," on finding himself over-reached; the solid qualities which command permanent esteem are nevertheless wanting. He has no depth of nature, lives for the moment, cares nothing for higher interests, has no aim but the present satisfaction of his pleasures or bodily wants, and if capable of generous impulses is no less so of plans of deepseated revenge. Open, manly, and even at times magnanimous,—with all the elements, in fact, that might have ripened into a splendid character,—the want of solid qualities changes him gradually into a mere Bedouin chief, living by war and plunder. The race of Edom which sprang from him—fickle, turbulent, false and unruly, embodies only too fully his worse characteristics. Their homes in the strong defiles of Seir, a fitting seat for attacking their neighbours, or for defence from their hatred, are themselves, when contrasted with Jacob's tents in the open country, striking commentaries on the respective tendencies of the two brothers.

In Jacob, on the other hand, we see the best as well as the worst qualities of his race. If the earlier half of his life shows much that is unworthy, even through it there runs that thoughtful foresight and steadfast pursuit of a great aim which alone secure lasting and noble results. In his sin against Esau and his father in regard to the birthright, he seeks a high end by ignoble means; he does evil that good may come. Its supreme worth, as carrying with it the inheritance of the Divine

promise, was little esteemed by Esau. "He did eat and drink, and rose up and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright." A short delay, at most, would have secured him food in his father's tents, without any sacrifice;[1] but to satisfy his hunger on the moment was more to a mind so light than any good even a little way off. To Jacob, on the other hand, to transmit the promise to his posterity, as the chosen race, was above all things precious. Disdaining useful work, Esau chose the busy idleness of life in the desert; but Jacob, during long years, was content to toil on patiently with settled purpose. Through prosperity and adversity; in distant exile and after his return; through years of sorrow and in his peaceful decline, the steadfast aim of his life never wavered. Nor did he show a less noble tenacity in other directions. The love which sprang up at his first meeting with Rachel at Laban's well made the seven years of hard service by which he had won her seem but a few days; and long after he had buried her on the way to Bethlehem, she was on his lips, in his dying words to her grandchildren.[2] His mother's nurse, whom she had brought with her from Harran, drew, in her declining years, to Jacob rather than Esau, and the grief he felt at the loss of such a link to the past was seen in the tree beneath which he laid her being henceforth known as "the oak of weeping."[3] Towards Joseph and Benjamin, Rachel's children, his relations were equally tender, for the very thought of their loss seemed as if it would "bring his grey hairs in sorrow to the grave."

Nor was there less at least of ultimate worth in the

[1] The pottage coveted by Esau was of lentils, a species of vetch. The red lentil is considered the best. It is generally used as pottage even now. Tristram's *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 462.

[2] Gen. xlviii. 7. [3] Gen. xxxv. 8.

higher aspects of his character. When he started from Bethel for Mesopotamia, his religion was still mingled with too much human contrivance; but he becomes a different man as he grows older. The struggles and trials of many years brought out what was best in him, and softened and melted away much that was ignoble and doubtful. We see him at his best, after the mysterious inward struggle in the night at Peniel; when "he wept and made supplication," "and had power over the angel and prevailed." Till then he had shown too much reliance on human craft, even while true to his faith in the promises; but trouble was gradually transforming him from Jacob, "the supplanter," to Israel, "the Prince of God." His prayer in anticipation of the meeting with Esau, with its touching confession that he was not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth shown him, breathes a very different spirit from that with which he left Canaan long years before; and this contrite humility presently won its final triumph in the mysterious scene at the ford of the Jabbok; a name meaning "the wrestler." Purified and proved by trial, the higher qualities of his nature, for the most part, shine out more and more, till it is felt to be in perfect keeping with his later life that he alone of the patriarchs, as a ripened saint, leaves a solemn prophetic blessing to his children as he dies.

In their boyhood the two lads had enjoyed the privilege of having their grandfather Abraham with them, for he survived till they were about fifteen. But neither of them reproduced his grand characteristics. The first forty years of their life developed two very different men. Esau was clearly reverting to a lower grade of civilization—that of the wandering Bedouin; Jacob slowly advancing from the life of a shepherd to that of a tiller

of the ground. Isaac, little inclined to moving about, had added agriculture to the care of flocks. Broad fields and abundant harvests became familiar sights at Gerar and Beersheba, and quickened a love for the soil in Jacob, which he afterwards showed in his fields at Shechem,[1] and transmitted to his posterity. With the one exception of a proposal from a neighbouring petty king to take Rebekah into his harem, little could have disturbed these tranquil years. Strifes about wells were apparently the only break in the quiet; for the Philistines, envious of Isaac's prosperity, and perhaps half afraid of his many retainers, once and again disputed his possession of the wells he had sunk with great labour through the limestone rock. They had already taken the common Oriental course for driving away unwelcome or hostile neighbours, of filling with earth those dug by Abraham; but nothing could ruffle the even spirit of the peace-loving Isaac. To hew out a well in the desert pastures, was a great thing, in which even the chiefs were proud to join. Its successful termination inspired the poets of the tribe, and caused universal rejoicings. "Spring up, ye springs," says a snatch of an old popular song of Israel, of the time of the wilderness wanderings,[2] "springs which princes dug—which the nobles of the people hewed out, with the ruler's staff and their sceptre." King Uzziah was famous for his many wells, and doubtless Isaac was no less so in his day. Fierce and desperate feuds doubtless sprang up from time to time when possessions so precious were assailed; but Isaac, timid and gentle, only moved to other pastures and sank other wells. In these disputes we can well imagine Esau taking part; but Jacob, like his father, would be more likely to think quiet cheaply bought by yielding.

[1] Gen. xxxvii. 7. [2] Num. xxi. 17. See Ewald, *Gesch.*, vol. ii. p. 287

The marriages of the patriarchal families decided the history of their subsequent branches. Quiet progress from households of shepherds to a settled nation turned necessarily on the life adopted, and that again was largely affected by the domestic alliances made. The daughter of Bethuel, coming from "the city" of Nahor, must have brought with her the instincts of a settled life, and so, also, with the daughters of Laban, Bethuel's son. But what instincts could grow up in the children of Ishmael or Esau, except those of the wild, unimproving Arab; born as they were of idolatrous mothers, wherever the wandering camp of their parents chanced for the time to be pitched. It was a Divine impulse, therefore, which, acting through the Eastern craving for unmixed blood, led to the choice of brides, for Isaac and Jacob, from the old home of the race. Esau's leanings were only too plain in his bringing home two Hittite maidens as wives.[1] It was clear that the traditions of Abraham and Isaac had no hold on him, and that their worship of the One only God, to whom he himself had been dedicated by circumcision, was nothing in his eyes. To build up a chosen race, the heirs of the Divine covenant, involved strict separation from the heathen around; but Esau, with this knowledge, had deliberately forsaken his own race, with all its hopes and aspirations, and identified himself with those from

[1] Isaac and Esau both married at the age of forty, and the connection of Jacob's being sent off to Mesopotamia for a wife, with the statement of the grief of both parents at Esau's alliances, points to both events happening near each other in time. Moreover, chap. xxviii. 9 assumes that Ishmael was alive when Jacob was sent off. But he was 114 years old when Esau married, and lived in all 137 years, so that he died when Jacob was sixty-three or sixty-four. Jacob must therefore have gone to Mesopotamia long before, and was probably just over forty when he did so. See art. Jakob, in *Riehm*. So, also, Michaelis, in *Mosaisches Recht*.

whom God had required them to keep themselves distinct. No wonder that it was "bitterness of heart" to both Isaac and Rebekah, to see him thus break away from all they counted most sacred, and despise his birthright by slighting the conditions which God had imposed for its inheritance.

In this light the eagerness of Rebekah to secure for her favourite Jacob the blessing so utterly disregarded by his brother, is more easily understood, though no excuse can be offered for the treacherous and selfish means by which it was obtained; means sorely punished by the course of his future life, for Rebekah never saw Jacob again after his exile, and Jacob had to toil for over twenty years, far from home, so dear to an Oriental, instead of sharing the ease and wealth of his father's tents. But craft and deceit are natural to the Arab, and Laban's character shows that in this, Rebekah's family was no exception. Nor is it to be overlooked that Jacob makes no afterclaim for the birthright on the ground of his transaction with Esau, whose withdrawal to the desert, long before his father's death, of itself left him the headship of the race.[1]

[1] The hair of Syrian goats is in some parts of the creature so fine that it was used by the Romans as a substitute for human hair.* The expression "he smelled the smell of his raiment" (xxvii. 27) is illustrated by the customs of India at the present day. "It is not common to salute," says Roberts, "they simply smell each other." Of an amiable man it is said, "How sweet is the smell of that man!" So, a lady wishing to show love to a child, in Asia Minor, still says, "Come hither, darling, and let me smell thee." Eastern garments are very often highly perfumed. Rosenmüller's *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 122.

The "dew of heaven" (xxvii. 28) is essential to the harvest in Palestine after the rains have ceased. If it fail, there is no crop; if it be abundant, the crops are heavy.

* *Martial*, xii. 46. *Tuch*, on v. 16.

Esau's defection alone would have demanded a careful marriage for Jacob, and the necessity for flight gave the desired opportunity to secure it. Jacob must go to Mesopotamia, to the old home of the race, to seek there a wife of the pure blood. That he would be welcomed was a matter of course, for it is still the rule among Arabs that a cousin, as one of themselves, has the first claim in marriage.[1] Receiving, therefore, a parting blessing from Isaac, involving the transmission of the great promise to Abraham, he sets out on his long journey, and on the second or third night reaches the heights over which the track lay to the north, along the backbone of the Palestine hills. Taking for a pillow one of the many stones which lie around, amidst sheets of bare rock, and sinking into the sleep of the weary, the thoughts which had engaged him by day, took shape in a vision.[2] The great stones on all sides build themselves up into a vast staircase, lost in the heights of the open sky, and on this angels are seen ascending and descending.[3] It was clear that other spots than Beersheba were under heavenly protection, and that, little as he had thought it, he was the object of loving interest to the messengers of God. Still more, the Divine voice sounds from the light in which the vision seemed to lose itself above, assuring the houseless wanderer that the promise given to Abraham would be fulfilled to himself, since he felt its value, and that wherever he went God would protect him, and in due time restore him to the land he was leaving. No wonder if on waking he felt, that though he had hitherto

[1] Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, vol. i. p. 215.

[2] The words "God who *answered* me in my distress," spoken long afterwards (chap. xxxv. 3) in reference to this incident, seem to imply earnest prayer as marking it.

[3] Angels were not yet imagined as having wings.

thought of God as specially present at the altar-sanctuary of Beersheba, He was no less present even here. To the wanderer the spot was henceforth "BETHEL, the House of God," and "The gate of Heaven." [1]

Abraham and Isaac had built altars to commemorate Divine appearances, but Jacob had to content himself with setting up the stone on which his head had rested, as a memorial; some of the oil he carried with him as food, serving as the symbol of an offering to anoint it. In all ages the earliest approaches to a "House of God," whether in eastern or western lands, have been equally rude. Similar stone memorials had already, from the remotest times, abounded in Canaan and the countries round it. The one now raised by Jacob in the centre of the land, was hence in keeping with a well known practice, and made the spot so specially holy, that Canaanite and Hebrew, alike, afterwards fought for its possession through centuries.[2] A second and more permanent memorial, in the pillar raised by him on his return from Mesopotamia,[3] long after, and consecrated not only by anointing, but by his pouring a drink offering over it, showed the intense impression left on his mind by the vision; an impression which re-appears even in his dying blessing on Joseph, in which he can think of God only as the "Shepherd of the stone of Israel." [4] Nor are echoes of Bethel wanting from a wider circle than Israel, for the Phenicians gave a god, once highly honoured by them on this very

[1] See a striking passage in Herder's *Ebräische Poesie*, vol. ii. p. 21. Jacob's vow to pay God a tenth of all that God might give him (ver. 22) was the ground of the gift of the tenths to the Levites as God's representatives. *Michaelis*, vol. iii. p. 22.; iv. p. 96. Jacob himself only imitated Abraham. *See* p. 383.

[2] Josh. xii. 16. Judg. i. 22.

[3] Gen. xxxv. 14.

[4] Gen. xlix. 24.

spot, the name of Batulos, while the sacred stones worn in their "charms," bore the name of Batulia.[1] Sacred stones known by that name, were, indeed, worshipped also in Phrygia, Syria, on the Euphrates, and in Egypt; while a rude stone, older than any temple, was anointed with oil by pilgrims at the ancient Delphi, and the Mahometan world to this day reveres the black stone of the Caaba, at Mecca, as a relic of Abraham and Ishmael.[2] The incident doubtless marks the beginning of a great revolution in the patriarch's spiritual life. That all his craft in overreaching Esau had ended, so far, only in lonely exile, when remembered in connection with the heavenly vision, must have made him feel that crooked ways had no sanction from God, even when used for good ends; and that he must henceforth follow a higher course. In his future intercourse with Laban, indeed, he opposes craft with craft, but only when forced, after long and faithful service, to defend himself and his household from cunning which sought to undo him. It is no longer his choice, but his necessity.

Strengthened to abiding trust in the Promise renewed to Him by the Divine voice itself, and by the assurance that angels were near Him, fugitive and wanderer as He was, to promote its fulfilment and to watch and guard him, Jacob "lifted up his feet," and at last came to the land of "the Sons of the East." What follows is a charming idyll. Resting by a well in

[1] Ewald, *Alth.*, p. 159.

[2] Sir W. Muir's *Mahomet*, p. 14. The Scotch coronation stone, now in Westminster Abbey, was held in a similar way to be Jacob's pillow.

[3] It is often spoken of as "Padan" (the yoke, or hollow between two ranges of hills) of "Aram." *Ewald*, vol. i. p. 461. Col. Chesney describes the landscape of Harran as shut in by a low range of

the district whence his forefathers had come,[s] he learns from some shepherds gathered around it, that he is close to the encampment of his uncle Laban, and that Rachel, his cousin, will soon come to water her father's flock. Erelong she appears, leading her sheep; for, then, as now, it was the custom for the unmarried daughters of chiefs to take the flocks to pasture and to water. But to see is to love; at once, and for life. Rolling aside the stone which covers the well[1] Jacob takes her toil on himself. His strength and goodwill are hers, till at last, the work done, his emotion breaks out incontrollably, and, with the privilege of a relation, he falls on her neck and kisses her; weeping for very joy, like a true Oriental, as he tells her he is Jacob, her cousin, the son of Rebekah. Even Laban, cold and hard as he was, is

limestone hills which runs to it from Oorfa. The plain is threaded with beds of ancient irrigating canals, drawn from the river Belik. The archways and towers of the ancient castle noticed already (p. 317) are still perfect, and the old city can still be traced underneath; its streets, laid out at right angles, and the wreck of marble and porphyry pillars lying round. But this relates to an indefinitely later age than that of Jacob. Things, then, would be more aptly illustrated, perhaps, by the tents of the Arabs in the neighbourhood, and by their beehive-shaped stone huts, the roof self-supporting. *Expedition to the Euphrates*, p. 433.

[1] Wells are still the spots where the youth and girls of Bedouin life congregate, and at the wells alone is Oriental courtship carried on to this day. The Syrian girl, especially if a Druse or a Christian, unlike the secluded daughter of the towns, is frequently entrusted with the care of her father's flock. The well, the most precious of possessions, is carefully closed with a heavy slab until all those whose flocks are entitled to share its water have gathered. The time is noon. The first comers gather and report the gossip of the tribe. The story of Jacob and Rachel is, in its most minute details, a transcript of the Arab life of to-day. Tristram's *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 142.

touched by the story, and running to greet his sister's son, leads him home with tender embraces, and long and repeated kissing,[1] making him welcome as "his bone and his flesh."

A month's stay showed that the value of Jacob's skill and industry as a shepherd made it desirable to retain him. But now begins the long record of Laban's selfish and crafty greed. "Why should Jacob, though a brother, serve for nothing? To a brother one gives rather more than less." The answer was ready. Could he only have Rachel, his love at first sight, he would gladly work seven years to get her; a proposal as gladly accepted, for was he not a tribesman and a cousin; and so the long week of years, spent in her presence, "seemed but a few days for the love he had to her."

For the double marriage which followed, Jacob can hardly be blamed, for he was tricked into it, and indeed the custom alleged is still strictly followed in India,[2] though it was forbidden to the Hebrews.[3] Marriage with cousins was not, however, prohibited to them, though even in Jacob's day, such unions as that of Abraham with his half sister Sarah, or of Nahor with his niece Milcah, which continued common among Canaanites, Arabs, Egyptians,[4] Assyrians, and later among the Persians, had apparently ceased in Israel, when the growth of the nation offered a wider selection. In the Mosaic law such marriages were strictly forbidden.[5]

[1] The Hebrew verb is in the conjugation Piel, which has this force.

[2] *Rosenmüller*, vol. i. p. 138. The Book of Jubilees, Cap. xviii. proposes this even for a law in Israel.

[3] Lev. xviii. 18.

[4] Ebers' *Uarda*, vol. i. p. 159.

[5] Lev. xviii. 9, 11; xx. 17. Deut. xxvii. 22.

The dull and weak eyes of Leah were a poor exchange for Rachel, for she was finely made and had the splendid gazelle-like eyes so dear to an Oriental.[1] But Eastern brides come to their husbands veiled, and the substitution of one sister for another was easy. A second long week of years must be served for Rachel, though he might take her as his wife forthwith.[2] "Keep the week's wedding feast for Rachel, as you have done for Leah, and you may have her, if you serve seven years after, in payment." Rebekah had received several slaves as her dowry, but Laban, ever mean as he was shifty, gives Leah and Rachel only one apiece.[3]

A double marriage is seldom happy, but the trick by which Jacob had been forced into this one added a special trouble, in the inevitable partiality for the one sister, and apparent neglect of the other. Leah's numerous family, however, and Rachel's childlessness, must have seemed, even to Jacob, the rebuke of Providence for his different treatment of the two, though it served only as a partial solace to Leah's wounded spirit. Nothing, indeed, could be more touching than the dismal rivalry between the sisters, nor could any commentary more telling be found against the practice of polygamy. The names

[1] This is the sense of Gen. xxix. 17.

[2] He received Rachel for the work he *was* to serve (xxix. 27).

[3] Daughters seldom had any inheritance, though this was not always the case, as we see in the daughters of Zelophehad. Num. xxvii. 2, 3, 4. All daughters moreover, were not sold, and those who were not had so much the greater claims on their husbands. Hence the complaint of Rachel against her father: "Hath he not counted us as strangers? for he hath sold us and hath quite devoured also our money (that which he got for us)" *Michaelis*, vol. ii. pp. 71, 75, 108. The custom of serving a term of years as payment for a wife is still common in Syria. Kitto's *Pictorial Palestine*, vol. i. p. 93.

given by Leah to her successive children, and the gift of the personal slave-attendants of each sister in turn to Jacob, as concubines, that each might adopt as her own the offspring thus born, speaks of long years of domestic misery. Leah herself bore her husband six sons and a daughter, the only one named in Jacob's family, though there no doubt were others.[1] Zilpah "the droppings of myrrh," Leah's maid, added to these, two sons, whom Leah adopted.

But now, at last, Rachel's sorrow is turned to joy by the birth of Joseph, a name which, by a play on the word, spoke at once of her reproach being "taken away" and of her hope that still another son would be "added."[2] Yet it was not till after long years that the second came, and then only to be Benoni, the "son of her sorrow."

The bargain with Laban for the wages of the third seven years shows craft met by more than its match. "I have consulted divination," says Laban, "and the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake:"[3] a strange mixing of heathen rites with the true religion, in keeping with his worshipping household gods. "Appoint me thy wages, and I will give it." Anxious to return to Canaan, Jacob sees in the offer a means of wealth at which he grasps. The colour of flocks must have been less varied in Laban's day to let him accept the conditions offered; for those claimed by Jacob, the brown sheep, and the spotted, ring-streaked and speckled goats, are very numerous in every flock now.[4] But had he known it, the cunning Jacob was less indebted to his fanciful schemes for

[1] Chap. xxxvii. 35.

[2] Asaph = to take away; jasaph = to add.

[3] Rev. J. M. Rodwell, in *Trans. of Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. p. 115. The text quoted is Gen. xxx. 27.

[4] Tristram's *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 144. *Land and Book*, p. 202.

lessening Laban's wealth and increasing his own than he fancied, for it is certain that his device to secure the colours he wished could have no effect, and that the result was rather a direct favour from God.[1] The struggle is one of patient determination against every difficulty. The wage is ten times changed, and Jacob has to make good all losses by wild beasts or theft, by day or by night; but he keeps to his work with invincible patience, and honest fidelity. "In the day," said he, afterwards, without contradiction, to Laban, "the drought consumed me, and the frost by night,[2] and my sleep departed from mine eyes. God has seen my trouble and the labour of my hands."

The story of his final flight to Canaan is perfect in its Oriental colouring. At the head of his flocks and herds; with his wives, children and slaves, he strikes away, across the Euphrates, at the utmost speed so cumbered a march allows, for Mount Gilead, the outpost of "his own country." His flight remains unsuspected for three days, but, then, Laban, hearing of it, sets off on swift camels in pursuit; overtaking the fugitives on the seventh day, while they were still among the richly wooded and watered hills of Gilead, which mark off the fertile land from the desert, east of the Jordan.

The five tents of Jacob and his wives[3] had been pitched on the slope of the hills, apparently where they reach their highest elevation of 5,000 feet, not far from the

[1] *Tristram*, p. 144.

[2] The absence of clouds in hot countries permits so great a radiation of the heat of the earth into space, after sunset, there being no muffling of clouds to check it, that the nights are very cold. Hence rheumatism and similar ailments are especially common among the shepherds of Palestine. In *The Land and The Book*, the cold at night is noted, p. 369.

[3] Chap. xxxi. 33.

Jabbok, the camels and flocks lying around, and now those of Laban are set up on a neighbouring hill, specially known as Mount Gilead. It is a moment of real danger to Jacob, for Laban's kinsmen, as the men of his tribe with him are called, are much the stronger.[1] He had given his daughters no inheritance,[2] and had treated Jacob with the utmost duplicity and harshness, but with true Arab dissimulation he chides Jacob for having stolen away without giving him an opportunity of dismissing him and his wives with a parting feast, or even letting him give his daughters a farewell kiss. That he was thus placable, was due, we are told, to a dream he had had overnight, warning him to do Jacob no harm. But the fugitives had done him the terrible wrong, as he must have thought it, of stealing his "gods," and these must be given back. Rachel, indeed, without Jacob's knowledge, had carried them off, doubtless for her own superstitious use, and had hidden them in one of the great basket-like bags fixed to the sides of her camel's saddle,[3] as a commodious lounge on the journey; and now sat in it, over them, feigning sickness; so that, as politeness would not allow her to be disturbed, they were not discovered, and Laban had unwillingly to lose them.[4]

[1] ver. 29. [2] ver. 14.

[3] *Tristram*, p. 61. There is also a kind of palanquin, five feet long, with curtains over and around it, which is fastened across the saddle of the camels for ladies' travelling. It may have been something of this kind. Burckhardt's *Bedouins*, p. 370. Ker Porter's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 339.

[4] It is to be noticed that in chap. xxxi. 32, Jacob tells Laban, that he will put to death any person in his encampment found to have stolen the gods. Thus, the patriarchs exercised the power of life and death. From chap. xxxviii. 24, it is further evident that even the heads of divisions or families in the encampment had this power. It is curious also to note, that Laban makes Jacob promise to take no more wives (chap. xxxi. 50).

A treaty must, however, in Arab fashion, be made between him and Jacob, as a witness to their quiet parting, and a mark of the bounds henceforth to be fixed between them. Gladly assenting, Jacob, seemingly still as strong as when he, singly, rolled off the great stone from the well mouth of Harran, by himself sets up on end a great stone as a memorial pillar; at the same time making his people pile up a cairn, like that which still marks off the limits of Arab tribes. On this, to confirm the treaty, the two parties hold a feast; for doing so, especially taking bread and salt together, is still among Arabs a solemn pledge of friendship and brotherhood, and if needed, of protection.[1] The night thus spent in friendship and joy, Laban and his camels strike off in the morning into the desert, and with them vanishes the last trace of the connection of the Israelites with Mesopotamia.[2] Gilead was henceforth the boundary between then and the Aramaic-speaking races of the east. The dialects of both peoples, indeed, marked the spot; for Jacob had followed Abraham and Isaac in the use of Hebrew, and called his cairn Mizpah, the watch tower; from whose height, in the simple ideas of the times, God is to look far and wide to see that the treaty is kept; while Laban, "the white Syrian," called it Galeed, instead of Gilead, as Jacob would have pronounced it.[3]

Breaking up his camp on the heights of Gilead, from whence he could look over into the Land of Promise, the

[1] The words Gen. xxxi. 54, "offered sacrifices," means "killed beasts for a feast."

[2] Stanley's *Jewish Church*, vol. i. p. 63.

[3] God is spoken of in this incident for the first and last time as, "the God of Abraham and of Nahor—the God of their father." (Terah)—if, indeed, Laban did not think of a god for each; for Dillmann translates it, the gods of their fathers. Jacob swears by God under the name of "The Fear" of his father Isaac.

past, with its failings and lower qualities seems to pass away from Jacob, and a higher spirit take their place. As angels had appeared when his wanderings began, so now, again, they visit him, perhaps this time also in a vision, even before he has crossed the Jordan on his return; to greet and welcome him back, and conduct him over the threshold of the sacred land. Henceforth he knows the place as Mahanaim, "the double camp,"—his own, and that of a host of angels,—a name it afterwards bore as one of the chief towns of Gilead.[1]

But now a new danger threatens him. Having sent messengers, as Arab chiefs are wont to do with each other, to Esau, to announce his return, he learns to his dismay that he is already on the way to him with 400 men. All he has won for himself, and even the future possession of Canaan, seems in extreme peril. Anticipating the worst, he divides his encampment, that one part may escape should the other perish. But his agony of mind proves the crisis of his spiritual history.[2] Feeling at last that he must depend only on God, and smitten with the remembrance of his past sins, which after twenty years have thus found him out, he pours forth a prayer which breathes the purest humility, gratitude, and contrition. Taking all precautions to propitiate a brother he had so greatly offended, he spends the night at the ford of the torrent Jabbok, deep down where it enters the Jordan—a mental struggle from which he comes forth, no longer Jacob, "the supplanter;" but Israel, "a Prince of God." It is not necessary to materialize the scene; for the soul is the true sphere of that wrestling which secures

[1] Josh. xiii. 26, 30. 2 Sam. ii. 8; xvii. 24, 27. 1 Kings iv. 14.

[2] Jacob's words in his prayer (xxxii. 11) are striking,—"He will come and smite me as one stabs the mother protecting with her body, her children like to be killed." Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1027.

spiritual blessing. Nor does even the halting on his thigh involve any physical struggle, though it implies miraculous agency.[1] Its lesson is only an enforcement

[1] Gesenius says the Hebrew words "Gid ha Nasheh," translated in our version, "The sinew which shrank," ought to be the sciatic* nerve. In the Arabic the word means this. The sciatic nerve runs from the hip down the back of the thigh, and is so broad and thick it might readily be thought a sinew. It is, in fact, the largest nerve of the body. *Thes.*, p. 921. Mühlau, *Lex.*, p. 171.

"The failings of the patriarchs are human, and the fact that they are not passed over in their history makes even the story of these shepherds of priceless worth to me. The timid Isaac, the crafty Jacob, stand before me as they really were; but they also show that the craft of the latter was of little service to him, and in his old age he shows a chastened and tried character which makes him a Ulysses among those Shepherd Fathers. His history is an instructive mirror of the human heart, and God Himself has effaced the blots which the youthful Jacob bore in his very name. 'Thou shalt be no longer Jacob,' says He, 'but a hero of God, Israel,' a name of honour which the poetry of the race adopts. It is not bodily might that is recorded in it, but the heroism of God, prayer and faith. . . . Jacob has divided his camp and flocks from fear of a nocturnal surprise by his brother. Now, far from his tent, not to sleep, but rather to keep from sleep, he prayed he wrestled with God in supplication, and a visible symbol was granted him that his hero-like faith had prevailed. Elohim appeared, not Jehovah, and you know that that word is always used with a special significance in Jacob's history as well as in the earlier parts of Scripture. Hosts of God place themselves by him like two wings of an encamped army. . . And lo, there appears the divine form of a heavenly warrior and wrestles with him. All vanish with the dawn—indeed the tone and colour of the whole narrative move dimly, as if under the mysterious shades of night. The wrestler does not give his name, but leaves it to be conjectured. Jacob does not triumph, tells the story to no one, only wonders how a simple shepherd like him could have seen Elohim face to face and still live. But the great charm is the inner lesson. It is shown the trembling patriarch how idle it is to fear Esau, when he has overcome Jehovah by his prayer."† Herder's *Ebräische Poesie*, vol ii. p. 19.

* Or ischiatic. † Hos. xii. 4, 5.

of what had preceded—that human policy is no safe reliance, but that he must trust in God.

He must be made to feel that He to whom he looks as his Protector, and on whose promises he relies, is pure and holy, and has no pleasure in lying and deceit. The mighty struggle was that of God with the still resisting evil of his nature; a struggle which cannot be spared any one destined to high spiritual ends, and conscious of being so. His whole past, from first to last, had been more or less a web of craft and contriving. He had striven with men and might flatter himself to have overreached them; but he has now to contend with God. The agony was long and terrible—through the whole darkness of night, till the dawn—but it was the wrestling of the new higher life with the old and evil; the agony of repentance and of a new birth, and from it he emerged a new man with a new name.[1] It was needed that he should have such a preparation to enter aright on his great inheritance, from which only the Jordan now divided him.

The dreaded meeting with Esau having passed off in peace, and his future friendship having been secured, with wonderful tact, by courtesy and splendid gifts; Jacob moves over the Jordan, to the first camping ground of his race in the vale of Shechem, consecrated by Abraham's altar, the oldest Hebrew sanctuary in the land; and thus the natural resting place of this second, and more weighty immigration from Chaldea.[2]

The re-appearance of Jacob and his shepherd tribe was, indeed, a great historical event, for they bore with them the future religious destinies of the world. Abraham's arrival had been only the first wave of the Hebrew

[1] Umbreit, *Studien und Kritiken* (1848), p. 121.

[2] Gen. xxxiii. 18, 20; xlviii. 22. Josh. xxiv. 32. John iv. 5, etc.

movement, and it had, for the time, receded. In Jacob's return, it flowed back with permanent results. Ewald compares the new comers, as contrasted with other Arab immigrants, to the Franks among the German invaders of Western Europe—the freest, shrewdest, most advanced of their race; under a leader who reflected in his own character, at once the noblest and the most imperfect qualities of his descendants.[1]

But Jacob is no longer like Abraham, only a shepherd chief, for the pastoral life is giving way to the agricultural, so that instead of pitching a tent, he "builds him an house," and make booths or huts for his cattle—from which the place takes the name of Succoth.[2] The broad valley is no longer open pasture land, but belongs to Shechem, a Hivite chief, who has built a town on one part of it, and to the east of this,[3] Jacob pitches his tent.[4] Nor has he a thought of moving thence, but buys a field for a homestead, paying for it, no longer as Abraham had done, when he bought Machpelah, in silver weighed in scales, but with coined money, apparently bearing on it the oldest mark of coinage, the figure of a lamb.[5] Here, after

[1] Graetz speaks of the "Shepherd tribe passing the Jordan on a fine sunny day of spring," (vol. i. p. 1) but Dr. Thomson fixes the time as in autumn, from Jacob having lambs with him (Gen. xxxiii. 13), and also from his making booths at Shechem to protect his flocks, a step needful only in preparation for winter. *The Land and The Book*, p. 205.

[2] The Booths. [3] "Before the city," east of it.

[4] Our version says "Jacob came to Shalem," and there is still a Salem among the hills on the east of the plain, opposite Shechem; but the word Shalem is thought by Mühlau and Volck to mean "in safety" (to Shechem). So Tuch, Knobel, Delitzsch and Kalisch.

[5] Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, art. Kesita. Silver is the only money mentioned till David's time, when gold appears. The Phenicians used coin, other peoples still bartered. Ch. xxv. 25. Michaelis *Mos. Recht.*, vol. ii. p. 9. Wiseman's *Lectures*, vol. ii. p. 109.

a time, he seems to have dug the well[1] which still bears his name, on his own purchased ground, to prevent any such disputes as had happened at Beersheba, and to secure water for his flocks at all times—even should his neighbours forbid him the use of the forty springs which are said to run through the valley;[2] and here, in after days, Joseph, now a growing lad, ordered that his bones should be buried. It was natural that, with these traditions, Shechem became for Ephraim what Hebron was to the whole race, and that it hence took the foremost place in the future history of the settlement of the northern part of the land.

But all did not go on peacefully in this sweetest of Palestine valleys. The treacherous sacking of Shechem, with its slaughter of all the men, the leading off the women and children as slaves, and the taking all the cattle and property, speaks at once for the numbers of Jacob's people, and for the deceitful ferocity of some, at least, of his sons.[3] After such a deed, it was to be feared

[1] It was no slight undertaking to sink such a well, and indeed, in Palestine, it was a more famous work than the erection of a castle or a fortress. It is dug first through the alluvial soil, which is lined, throughout, with strong rough masonry, and then through the living rock, to an unknown depth. It is still about 75 ft. deep, but so recently as 1838 it was 30 ft. deeper; each year helping to fill it up, from the practice of all who visit it, both natives and travellers, throwing in stones to hear their rebound. This custom, which may be recent, adding to the accumulation of 4000 years, has filled it up perhaps one half. The shaft is $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet in diameter, and the whole work must have been the labour of years, and have been very costly.*

[2] *The Land and The Book*, p. 473. *Land of Israel*, p. 147.

[3] Reuben does not seem to have taken part in it, perhaps as having a special responsibility as the eldest (xxxvii. 21; xlii. 22). the next eldest, Simeon and Levi, were therefore the leaders. The

* See, My *Life and Words of Christ*, vol i. p. 520.

that the neighbouring tribe-connections of the ruined community might join against the strangers who had acted so cruelly, and hence Jacob determined to leave the district. Yet Shechem seems to have remained permanently in the hands of his people, for it is it apparently which he gave on his death-bed to Joseph; when, with a play on the word used, characteristic of the Hebrews even in their most solemn acts, he assigned him a "portion" or rather "shoulder," more than his brethren: Shechem bearing that meaning.[1] Even in the peaceful Jacob, the fire of a warlike Arab chief seems in a moment to kindle, when he speaks of it as "taken from the hands of the Amorites with his sword and bow."

The vow made when at Bethel more than twenty years before, on his way to Harran, had not yet been honoured, and it was fitting that it should be so, now that Shechem must be left. Since Abraham's day circumcision had marked the Hebrews as the chosen people in contrast to the Canaanites; but the mere outward consecration to Jehovah was not enough; His exclusive worship was essential to the fulfilment of the national covenant with Him. Rachel's theft of her father's "gods" had shown, of itself, that the idolatry of Harran had a footing in the encampment, and it must be rooted out, if possible. The whole tribe, therefore, was required to give up everything heathen; Rachel, her father's gods or teraphim;[2] others

real ground of offence on the part of Shechem was, doubtless, his not belonging to the tribe; no offers of honourable reparation availed anything against the stain of a mixed marriage.

[1] ch. xlviii, 22. Besides, Joshua goes to Shechem without any notice of having needed to conquer it. Josh. viii. 30–35. See Michaelis, *Mosäisches Recht*, vol. i. p. 126.

[2] The word used is teraphim, which seem to have been originally

the idols, which, it seems, they cherished; and those who had them, the ear-rings and armlets,[1] used as idolatrous charms, and the whole, when gathered, were buried under the oak at Shechem; known hitherto as that beneath which Abraham's tent had been pitched, but henceforth as the "oak of the magicians."[2] A formal religious purification of the person and all raiment was

figures, generally of small size, and of hideous form, which were supposed to frighten away evil spirits from the house in which they were honoured. A small image in the Louvre, supposed to be a teraphim, is a frightful demon in its upper part, with the body of a dog, the feet of an eagle, hands armed with lion's claws, a scorpion's tail, a skeleton head with the flesh half off but the eyes remaining, goat's horns rising above, and four wings stretching round. This image was to be placed at the door or window, to turn back any demon. Lenormant's *La Magie*, p. 48. M. Botta found others at Khorsabad, in holes specially prepared for them, under the pavement before the gates of the palace. They were small images of baked clay, of forms as frightful as that of the one at the Louvre. See quotation in full in Mill's *Nablus*, p. 51. Teraphim is a plural form, perhaps from their always, apparently, consisting of parts of different beings. The root seems to mean "to strike with fear," but Gesenius (*Thesaurus*, p. 1518) gives a different origin. The worship of teraphim continued in Israel till the exile (Ewald's *Alt.*, p. 256; *Gesch.*, vol. i. p. 462), but the subject will be better treated at a later period. One is reminded, while on this subject, of the name of Germanicus, graven on lead talismans, magic characters, and other enchantments, found on the ground and round the walls of that doomed man's house, and regarded even by Tacitus as bearing on his death. *Annal.*, ii. 49.

[1] It is curious to note that our word cameo is the Aramaic Kamea = an amulet, worn to guard the person from magical charms See *Amulete*, in Winer and Riehm. Ear-rings were worn for the same purpose. They were apparently engraved with magical characters or idolatrous signs. We read in Hosea ii. 13, of "ear-rings of Baalim."

[2] Judges ix. 37. Translated in our version, "The plain of Meonenim."

likewise enforced, in preparation for a renewed consecration of the whole community to the worship of the God of Bethel alone, at that venerated sanctuary.

The later years of the patriarch breathe a spirit of religious fidelity becoming such an act. At Bethel he builds an altar alongside the memorial stone raised to Him who "answered him in the day of his distress, and was with him in the way which he went," and consecrated

RACHEL'S SEPULCHRE.

it by a drink offering and anointing. But this devotion was soon disturbed by the shadow of trouble. Rebekah was dead, but Deborah, the nurse of her childhood and her bosom friend to the last, had come to close her days in the tents of the favourite son—and now she also passed away amidst such general grief, that the tree under which she was buried received the name of the "oak of weeping."

A still greater trial, however, was near. After perhaps fifteen or sixteen years from the birth of Joseph, Rachel died, at the birth of a second son, and Jacob had to bury her "in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." It has long disappeared, but a tomb, raised apparently on the same spot, still preserves its memory. How tenderly he loved her, even to the last hour of his life, appears in repeated touches. Her infant is to her "as her soul was in departing," Benoni—"the son of my anguish;" but to his father he is Benjamin, "the son of his right hand," that is, of his good fortune. At the loss of his son Joseph he "refuses to be comforted and will go down into the grave,[1] to my son, mourning," and in his last words to Joseph's sons, before he died in Egypt, forty years after her death, he repeats the whole story of her being taken away from him, as tenderly as if it had happened but yesterday.

Moving his desolate tent only a little way from the grave, to "the watch-tower of the flocks,"[2] he rested for a time near a spot so holy; then, moved on slowly to Hebron; "for the children were tender, and the flocks and herds with young were with him, and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock would die."[3] There, in the scenes of his youth and boyhood, he once more saw his father; and with him, or near, he stayed,

[1] The grave = Sheol, the region of the dead, is the word used. It means "the hollow." In Job xi. 8, the depth of Sheol is said to be only less wonderful than "the depth" (perfection) "of God" (ver. 7). The Shades of the dead were there in darkness (Job x. 22).

[2] Micah iv. 8. Migdal Edar.

[3] Chap. xxxiii. 13. For the risk of over-driving flocks in Palestine, see *The Land and The Book*, p. 331.

dutifully, till the old man died. Esau had long ago finally left Canaan, preferring the rough mountains of Seir, with their life of adventure and plunder, to the quiet monotony of pastoral or agricultural toil; but he and Jacob met once more at the burial of Isaac in the Cave of Machpelah, beside Abraham, Sarah, and Rebekah.

Always as much inclined to sow and reap, as to follow a pastoral life,[1]—for Isaac's fields and sheaves, long ago,

SHEPHERDS' REFUGE TOWER.
From "*L'Egypte—Etat Modern.*"

in Gerar, had turned his tastes that way—Jacob settled down in the district dear to him from the memories of his youth, and "dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger." Thence, however, his flocks were led far and near, as pasture offered, for we find them as far north as Shechem. It was in the pastures of its broad valley that Joseph found his brethren when sent from his father

[1] Chap. xxxvii. 7.

at Hebron to ask after their welfare, and it was at Dothan, or Dothain—the two wells—now Tell Dothan, north of Samaria, among the hills of Gilboa,[1] that the Arab caravan to which he was sold was seen toiling along the road which stretches from Bethlehem over the plains of Esdraelon towards the great sea-coast road to Egypt.

Nor is it without interest to find that Dr. Clarke met precisely here a caravan of Ishmaelitish spice traders, "who certainly would have been glad to have bought another Joseph, to carry him off to Egypt,"[2] while Canon Tristram, riding along the ridge of the hill, above the little plain, which still ranks as the best pasturage in the country; in the same way saw, below, a long caravan of mules and asses, laden, on their way from Damascus to the valley of the Nile.[3] The two wells are still in existence in the valley, one of them even now bearing the name of the "pit of Joseph." It is about three feet in diameter and at least thirty feet deep, the walls lined with masonry, but the bottom hewn out of the rock. Yet, as the water in it never dries up, it is hard to imagine that it can be the actual well into which Joseph was cast.[4] Dothan now shows little more than a wilderness of cactus or prickly-pear bushes, yet within even a few years past it was richly planted with citrons, oranges, and pomegranates, but they were destroyed by some troops sent from Nablus, to quell a local disturbance.[5]

[1] Conder's *Handbook*, p. 409. *Dillmann*, p. 408. *The Land and The Book*, p. 466.

[2] *Travels by Dr. E. D. Clarke* (London, 1822).

[3] *Land of Israel*, p. 134.

[4] Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria* (1822), p. 318.

[5] Guérin, *Description de la Palestine*, vol. ii. p. 319. The caravans come up the Ghor Beisan, pass by Terin and Lejjun, enter the hill country of Samaria by the valley of Dothaim, and then go on to Ramleh, Gaza, and Egypt. *The Land and The Book*, p. 460.

The close of Jacob's life saw the second temporary mmigration of the Hebrews to Egypt—this time to stay there for centuries. But this wider sphere belongs to a future chapter. The valley of the Nile was destined, in Providence, to be the shelter and nursery of Israel till it should grow from a tribe to a nation. "Fear not," said the Divine voice in a vision, "to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation; I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph will put his hand upon thine eyes," to close them in death. Thither, therefore, over the uplands of Beersheba, and through the gates of the frontier wall, the patriarch went; to meet his long lost son again, and to stand before the great Pharaoh. And there, in the fulness of time, when he felt himself dying, he left the command; in striking illustration of his abiding trust in the covenant of God with his race; that his bones should not rest in the gorgeous sepulchres of the Nile, but beside those of his fathers in the Cave of Machpelah; a pledge to his descendants of their future inheritance of the land of which their leaders had thus in death taken possession.

CHAPTER XXIV.

JOSEPH.

THE return of Jacob to Canaan was the first great step towards the formation of a Hebrew people. Hitherto there had been only individuals of the race; but with the family of Jacob it branched into numerous heads of the future tribes of Israel. The formal and solemn acceptance of the traditional faith of Abraham, by these at Bethel, determined henceforth the history of Israel as identified with the perpetuation and spread among mankind of the great doctrine of the Unity of God, and of the high standard of life which was known as "the way of Jehovah."[1] They had already been separated from the idolatrous nations around by circumcision—a sign of dedication to God borne about on their persons—and had come to regard it as a badge of proud superiority.[2] Everything which connected them with idolatry had been ignominiously buried beneath the oak at Moreh, and, at Bethel, they had, further, solemnly forsworn it as a community. If Abraham was the first preacher of God and His righteousness, the honour is due to Jacob of first having established the great patriarch's belief as the accepted faith of the Hebrew race.

But Canaan offered no facilities for the development of

[1] Gen. xviii. 19. [2] Gen. xxxiv. 14.

the nationality thus begun, while in the neighbouring Egypt, the great oasis of Arab geography, every condition was at hand. Thither, therefore, in the all-wise Providence of God, the embryo people were transferred, and that by an agency the most unlikely to bring it about —the sale of one brother by the others, as a slave, to a passing Ishmaelite caravan.

The story of Joseph is too universally known to need recapitulation in detail, but the illustrations it affords of Eastern and Egyptian manners are at once so interesting, and so confirmatory of the Bible narrative, that they may well command our attention. Intended to follow the shepherd life, Joseph first comes before us as learning the craft, under his half brothers,[1] the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, and incurring their hatred by letting their father know their manner of life. Only seventeen, and alike simple and pure, he was naturally a favourite with Jacob, now at least a hundred years old, and he was still more so as the elder son of his best loved and now lost wife, Rachel. Nor did the fond weakness of old age try to hide his partiality, for while all his other sons had the common shepherd's coat, reaching to the knees only, and without sleeves, he had one reaching to the ankles, with sleeves to the wrists,[2] and very possibly of fine Egyptian linen. Though not necessarily implied in the Hebrew words used, it may have been of "many" colours, for in the tomb at Beni Hassan,

[1] The words "the lad was with," are translated "and he was a servant with," by Gesenius and Knobel.

[2] "*Not* a coat of *many colours*." *Kamphausen*, arts. Farben, Kleider, in *Riehm.* Ges., *Thes.*, p. 1117 *a*, a garment long and full, worn by the children of nobles. Or, perhaps a parti-coloured robe, with sleeves and reaching to the feet. Jos., *Ant.*, vii. 8, 1. 2 Sam. xiii. 18.

Semitic visitors are seen dressed in robes of white, red and blue, apparently made of a patchwork of separate small pieces. It is, moreover, usual still in the East to dress favourite children in this way. Purple, scarlet, and other colours are pieced together with great taste, or the jackets worn are embroidered with gold, and silk of different shades.[1] The Turks at Haleb, Rauwulf tells us, have the same custom with their growing sons.[2] Such a dress of honour may have seemed to foreshadow Joseph's being made the heir, especially as Reuben and the elder sons had lost their father's favour by their misconduct. In any case, it roused jealous anger, which was only to be abated by the lad's death or his being sent away. The incident of the pit[3] is quite in keeping with Eastern customs, for underground cisterns abounded in Palestine, and when dry, were so often used for a dungeon—escape from them being impossible,[4] from their frequently bottle-like shape—that the Hebrew word for them also means a prison.[5] The passage of an Arab caravan towards

[1] T. Smith's *Joseph*, p. 1. Roberts' *Oriental Illustrations.*

[2] Rosenmüller, *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 174.

[3] They agree not to put him to a violent death, but to leave him in the dry rain-cistern to starve to death.

[4] The Canaanites had already dug many such cisterns (Deut. vi. 11) over the whole land (Neh. ix. 25). Towns, fields, and pastures alike needed them in a country largely dependent on rain-water as Palestine always was. Agriculture and grazing also imperatively required them, and hence any one who devoted himself largely to these had to dig many, as in the case of King Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi 10). The Moabite Stone of King Meza, orders every house in Korcha Dibon to have one to catch the rain-water. It was such a cistern as that into which Joseph was put that Jeremiah had for a dungeon (Jer. xxxviii. 6; Lam. iii. 53). They were generally covered over with a great stone. *Winer. Riehm*, art. Brunnen.

[5] Exod. xii. 29. Isa. xxiv. 22. Jer. xxxvii. 16.

Egypt,[1] and its purchase of Joseph, is equally true to early times, and to the unchanging Eastern life of to-day. Sir Samuel Baker's boy, Saat, had, in the same way as Joseph, been carried off, while he was tending goats, by an Arab caravan; hidden in a gum sack, and finally taken to Cairo and sold as a slave.[2] "All the world may perish, so far as we care," said an Arab to Niebuhr, "if only Egypt remains." And it was left to them even more in Joseph's day than now, from the dislike of Egyptians to leave their country even for purposes of gain. The trade in "spices" was exceptionally great between the valley of the Nile and neighbouring countries; from the quantity used for embalming mummies, for burning as incense, or as disinfectants; for which they were in great repute. Even the names of the first and second of the three spices named—gum tragacanth,[3] from Lebanon and Palestine generally, Armenia and Persia; balsam from the balsam-tree of Gilead; and ladanum—the gum collected still from the leaves of the cistus-rose—from Syria and Arabia, have been found in the list of 200 drugs named in the temple-laboratory of Edfu; for each temple had its laboratory and apothecary.[4] Even the twenty

[1] The name "Midianites" is used for the caravan as well as "Ishmaelites"—as equivalent to "trader"—just as the word "Canaanite" is similarly used. Both peoples, moreover, were descendants of Abraham, and Arabs "One needs to go to Egypt," says Ebers, ". . . to see the brown-skinned children of Israel, who brought camels richly laden from the East to the Nile. They are there drawn to the life on the monuments."

[2] Baker's *Albert Nyanza*, p. 85.

[3] Translated "spicery" in our version.

[4] Ebers' *Ægypten*, etc., pp. 290 ff. Dümichen, *Tempelinschriften, Edfu*, Taf. 52–75. *Geographische Inschriften*, Taf. 80–100. The trade with Egypt, as shown by the vegetable remains found in the tombs near the pyramids, included, amongst other things, juni-

pieces of silver given for Joseph are exactly the price fixed under Moses as that of a male slave between five and twenty years of age;[1] so nearly had human beings kept the same value for centuries.

The existence of slavery in Egypt is strikingly illustrated by countless pictures of slaves of both sexes, and of every colour, on the monuments, and still more so by the existence to this day of manuscripts in which disconsolate owners offer rewards to any who will bring back fugitive slaves. One of these is an advertisement by Prince Atefamen, a son of Rameses II., the great taskmaster of the Jews before the Exodus; and it is further certain that among these slaves were Hebrews and others of Semitic blood,[2] since under Rameses II. the Hebrew word for slave—ĕbed—is often used, and we read of

per berries from Phenicia; cedar-wood for sarcophagi, wooden images, etc.; cedar and pine resin; gums to bind the mummy cloths; myrrh, incense. The Great Harris Papyrus recounts among the gifts presented by Rameses III. to the temples, immense quantities of incense, wax, oil, perfumes, honey, etc., etc. The list, in endless variety, fills twenty-four pages of *Records of the Past*, vol. vi. pp. 23 ff.

The very names of two of the three "spices" carried to Egypt by Joseph's caravan are named in the papyri—the balm and the gum tragacanth—the same words being used for them as in the Hebrew Bible. Ladanum, the third mentioned in Genesis, is often found in the mummy cases, and its odour may be detected among those of other materials used in embalming the mummies. These three substances, moreover, are still principal articles of commerce between the East and Egypt. *Vigouroux*, vol. ii. p. 17.

[1] Lev. xxvii. 5.

[2] Syrian slaves sold in the bazaars of Memphis or Thebes were in special demand, and brought a very high price. Syrians and negroes were used, among other ways, to run before their master's chariot in the streets; a gold cane in their hand, or a whip, guiding the horses and clearing the way

Syrian slaves[1] who, indeed, were prized more than any others, as was afterwards the case in Greece and Rome. It was therefore a fortunate chance for the Ishmaelites to secure Joseph, a Syrian, for the Egyptian market. The special value of such slaves is strikingly shown by the fact, that in the treaty of Rameses II. with the Khetas, we find a clause providing that fugitives, who might flee to Syria, should be sent back to Egypt,[2] and there still remains a letter of a scribe to his father, the prophet Ramessu, of Hermopolis, telling all his adventures in an attempt to recover a runaway.[3]

The name of Potiphar, the Egyptian by whom Joseph was bought, is strictly Egyptian, and means one "dedicated to Ra," the Sun god; whose worship had its great centre at Heliopolis, in the south of Lower Egypt, close to Memphis, the favourite residence of the Pharaoh of Joseph's time, a great patron of the worship of Ra. The court of this king, like that of the other Pharaohs, abounded with officials of every kind—Privy Councillors, King's Relations, Masters of the Horse, Directors of the Court Music, Astrologers and Interpreters of Dreams, Librarians, Ministers of Public Buildings and of Tombs, Chiefs of the Palace, Treasurers of the Household and of the Kingdom; and, not to make the list too long, royal Fan-bearers, who seem to have been the highest civil officers of the Court and to have stood at the Pharaoh's right hand. On the left side, as the unprotected and weak one, stood the chief military officers who formed a kind of special bodyguard, though there was also a a force of guards, 2,000 men strong, who were better

[1] *Ebers*, p. 294. *Riehm*, 760.

[2] *Maspero*, p. 223.

[3] Chabas, *Mélanges Egyptologiques*, 3rd series, vol. i. p. 231. Soury, in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (15th Feb., 1875), p. 808.

paid than the soldiers of the line. But Potiphar could scarcely have been head of this force, as it was changed each year, while he lived permanently at Memphis. It seems, rather, that he was at the head of what we may call the Egyptian State police, which formed one of the corps of the army, though largely employed in civil duties.[1]

This body was already numerous and well organized in very ancient times, and had very extensive duties; for it was the law that every citizen had to appear yearly before the Police Superintendent of his district, and show how he made his living; any false statement being punished with death.

In Egypt, as in the Austria of to-day, everything was written down. The whole population of each "Nomos," or district, gathered under its standard, were enrolled singly by scribes in a register, on a fixed day; even the slaves being thus entered on the official lists. There is, indeed, a picture of such a yearly assembling, on one of the monuments of the 19th dynasty.[2] Nor was this more than a small part of the duties of the State police. They were charged with the detection and punishment of criminals; the pursuit and recapture of fugitive slaves; the safe watching of the countless prisoners of war; and the due execution of the forced labour of the people on public works, and of the toil of the public slaves at their set tasks. Duties so varied required a large body of men, and hence, besides scribes and officials charged with administering punishments, there had been organized, at least as early as the time of Abraham, a kind of gendarmerie corps, originally of foreigners; and with these were joined other bands of foreign soldiery, raised from Sardinia and elsewhere, who formed part of the personal

[1] *Vigouroux*, vol. ii. p. 28. [2] *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. p. 33.

state and protection of the Pharaoh. Over the whole there was necessarily a head officer, who, like the chiefs of other departments of government, was attached to the court, under the sounding title of "the two eyes of the King of Upper, and the two ears of the King of Lower Egypt."

It is probable that this was the dignity held by Potiphar, for it would give him precisely the duties which we find assigned to him—the charge of prisoners and prisons, and of bodily punishments and executions.[1]

The position of Joseph, as head over all the slaves in his master's house, and over all the household affairs, was one which constantly presents itself from the earliest times on the monuments and in the literature of Egypt. Every great family had a slave thus placed over all the rest, and indeed, Joseph himself, after his elevation, had such a majordomo. Wherever grain is being measured, or metal weighed, or building or agricultural work is going forward, the paintings show us the head-overseer of the household with a short rod in his hand, or with a writing tablet in his hand and a pen behind his ear; to take down the number of sheaves, or of casks, or of the cattle or flocks, and, like Joseph, he is expressly described as the "overseer." There were under-overseers of slaves, of the herds, etc., but the chief under whom all stood ranked very much higher than his subordinates, and was honoured by the special title of "governor of the house." In one papyrus, a "head-overseer of the cattle" is mentioned, who, stirred by ambition, betakes himself to magic, and comes to a sad end; and there is hardly a tomb of the rich, in the wall paintings of which we do

[1] *Ebers*, pp. 295–303. Ebers' *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 205, n. 23, vol. ii. p. 6, n. 7. *Riehm*, p. 760. Dillmann calls him "Captain of the palace guard." *Genesis*, on the verse.

not meet with counterparts of Joseph's position in the household of Potiphar.[1]

These strange palaces of the dead, in fact, bring before us continually the economy of great Egyptian establishments, such as he had to superintend in all its departments; for his office set him not only over the interior of the house, but over the varied labours of the field and of the estate. Nor was it a slight responsibility; for Egyptian courtiers were often immensely rich, and not a few of them take care to tell us in their tomb-inscriptions exactly the number of their cattle of every kind. One, for example, states that he had 835 oxen, 220 cows and calves, 760 asses, 2,235 goat-like sheep, and 974 goats; while another boasts of having possessed 405 cattle of one kind, 1,237 of a second, 1,360 of a third, 1,220 calves, and so on, while his geese, ducks, and doves were numbered by thousands.[2] Country houses and gardens are shown by the tombs to have been an especial delight of the wealthy, and these mansions have so many storehouses in them that an overseer was evidently indispensable. Rooms are seen full of flagons, jars, and vessels of every shape and of the most varied contents—gold and silver plate, dried fish, bread, bars of metal, etc.[3] In such a huge establishment the clear head and high principle of a man like Joseph would be invaluable, and it is only what might have been expected when we read that "seeing he had him, Potiphar concerned himself about nothing"[4] except his food, which the strict Egyptian laws of ceremonial cleanness and uncleanness

[1] Prisse d'Avennes, *Monuments Egyptiens* (1847), pl. 41. *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. p. 136. Hengstenberg, *Die Bücher Mose's*, p. 23. *Ebers*, p. 304.

[2] Brugsch, *Gräberwelt*, p. 47.

[3] *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. p. 129. *Ebers*, p. 304.

[4] Gen. xxxix. 6

would not permit a foreigner, especially of the shepherd caste, to touch.

The relation of husband and wife, as implied in the story of Potiphar's wife, has been objected to as not in keeping with a state of society like that of the Egyptians. But the paintings on the tombs and temples show with how little reason this criticism has been made. So far from being secluded from each other, the two sexes sat together at their parties and mingled freely in daily life, as may be seen in the pictures copied by Wilkinson.[1] In one of these the guests, of both sexes, sit, in company, in their best adornment, each smelling a lotos flower; while a female slave hands round the cup. The buffet is laden with every delicacy—fruits, pastry, cooked fowl, and jars of many kinds of drinks; naked female dancers, meanwhile, entertaining the party with their skill, to the music of a band of women; one of whom is playing on a flute, while the others set the time by measured clapping of their hands, accompanied, it is likely, with their voices. In the other picture, the company is also made up of both ladies and gentlemen. Some slaves are putting necklaces, as ornaments, round the necks of the invited, while others carry napkins, apparently for the use of those whom they may serve; to wipe their lips or hands. Women, indeed, appear to have had exceptional freedom and privileges in Egypt, if we may credit the ancients; for Herodotus says that they went to market while the men sat and wove at home, and that the duty of providing for aged parents lay on the daughters, and not on the sons.[2] Diodorus, moreover, asserts that on the Nile the queen was more honoured than the king, and that wives ruled their husbands, who were required in their

[1] Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. i. pp. 142, 143.

[2] *Herod.*, ii. 35.

marriage contracts to promise due obedience to their spouses![1]—an extraordinary arrangement which the monuments, at least in part, corroborate. In most cases the wife is spoken of as the "mistress of the house," or "the great house mistress," and the name of the mother stands always on a line with that of the father, but frequently before it, while the sons are often named only after their mothers.[2] At many receptions of foreign ambassadors the queen has the precedence. In almost all the graves and mummy papyri, man and wife sit beside each other, as bound to each other not only in this life, but in that beyond; and on countless tomb pictures we see the two sitting on a couch, the husband with his arm round his wife's neck, or the wife with hers round that of her husband. No boast is more frequent in funeral inscriptions than of the tenderness each felt to the last hour for the other, and wives are lamented as "devoted to their husbands," as "loving him," as "the palm-tree of love" to overshadow him. Reigning queens are mentioned from the earliest times, and not infrequently attained great fame as sovereigns; ranking, like the Pharaohs, even during their life, as divine beings. In death, moreover, women were more honoured than men, for female mummies are as a rule more richly embalmed, adorned, and entombed than those of the other sex.

Marriage was thus as sacred on the Nile as with ourselves. Man and wife ate together and lived together—not in separate chambers as in other Eastern nations—and a divorce was difficult to obtain; while infidelity on either side was one of the mortal sins which the soul had to prove, before the judges of the dead, that it had not committed. There was nothing, therefore, to prevent Joseph

[1] *Diod.*, i. 27. See also note on this subject, Ebers' *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 234.

[2] *Ebers*, p. 307.

and his mistress often meeting in her mansion, and, indeed, his duties may have required him to do so, as in the case of a wonderfully beautiful woman, whom a papyrus represents as going to the temple of Ptah to pray, attended by fifty maidens, in the company of a male slave; doubtless, like Joseph, of high position. Yet concubines and harems were not unknown in Egypt, for the Pharaohs, like all Eastern despots, indulged in this immorality, and had a "house of the women," over which eunuchs were placed; and the dignitaries of the land copied the example. But these mistresses were in no respect on a footing with the lawful wife, who sits beside her husband while the others amuse him as singers and dancers.[1]

That with all the honour paid to marriage, however, cases of painful breach of its duties were only too common in Egypt, is strangely illustrated by the "Story of the Two Brothers,"[2] a tale some centuries older than the Exodus, and thus perhaps contemporary with Joseph himself. It is almost exactly a repetition of the incident of Potiphar's wife, except that the victim is a younger brother of the husband, and suffers even more than Joseph; though in the end raised, like him, for his virtues, to the highest honours, while the wife is, at last, killed and thrown to the dogs by the god Anubis. Egyptian women, as a whole, had, indeed, only too doubtful a name, in spite of the virtues of many: for ancient testimony weighs very heavily to their prejudice.[3] Indeed, the very liberty enjoyed by the sex,

[1] With all the strictness of marriage law in Egypt, it is strange to notice that fashion allowed wives to expose their right breast in company, and to dress in stuffs which were well nigh transparent.

[2] Brugsch, *Aus dem Orient* (Berlin, 1864), p. 7.

[3] Hitzig's *Geschichte*, p. 57.

amidst influences so corrupting as those of the Egyptian religion, and the strange custom of dressing in fabrics so transparent as to show the whole person through them, were unfavourable to morality. The paintings of the tombs show the delight of Egyptian women in all the elegancies and little vanities of life. We can see from them how a rich matron of Thebes or Memphis spent her mornings. Slaves enter her chamber bringing delicate embroidered tunics, of brilliant colours; boxes of perfumes; caskets filled with bracelets and necklaces; bronze mirrors, and precious little cases. Reclining on a couch of ebony incrusted with ivory, she lets herself be dressed and adorned by her maids. One twists her black hair into small plaits, adding false ones to make up the number which a fashionable head-dress demands; another covers her arms, her ancles, and her bosom with rings, jewels, and amulets; she tries some finger-rings of gold with engraved stones; chooses the ear-rings which she will wear for the day; and while one slave opens the collyrium boxes and another mixes in the toilette cups the different ingredients for staining the nails, the eye-lashes, and the eye-brows, she listens vaguely, cooled by the soft air of fans, and wooed by the gentle music of lutes, harps, and flutes.[1] No wonder that a life of such effeminacy in the worst sense, should lead to scenes of offensive excess in wine at table among Egyptian ladies, or to others too gross to be described, painted on the walls of the Temple of Medineh Abu.[2]

The prison into which Joseph was thrown—"a place where the king's prisoners were bound"—is described in the Hebrew Bible by a word which Delitzsch explains as meaning "the fortress surrounded by a wall," and

[1] Soury, *Études Historiques sur les religions de l'Asie antérieure*, p. 166.

[2] *Wilkinson*, vol. i. p. 52.

such a prison, called by them the White Castle, is mentioned by Thucydides[1] and Herodotus,[2] as existing in Memphis, and is found under the same name on many Egyptian inscriptions. Memphis itself, indeed, was know by three names; its common one, Mennefer, "the Haven of the Good;" its sacred one, "the Dwelling of Ptah," for every Egyptian town had a sacred as well as a profane name; and also as the "the Town of the White Castle.[3] This citadel comprised the barracks of the garrison, some temples, and especially the prisons, and was under an officer of engineers, known as the Superintendent-in-Chief of the Walls and Fortifications of Memphis.[4] Nor was the office an honorary one, for the fortress and defences were so strong that they were reduced by Cambyses, more than a thousand years later, only after a regular siege. Potiphar, as Minister of Police, was, no doubt, the head of the citadel, or "House of the prison," as it is called in the Hebrew of Genesis, the words used being common in the inscriptions, as including the whole aggregate of buildings in any establishment.[5]

[1] *Thuc.*, i. 104.

[2] *Herod.*, iii. 13, 91. Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 311. Stories from Greek legend, parallel to that of Potiphar's wife, may be found in Rosenmüller's *A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 185. It is an aggravation of the charge against Joseph that he, a Hebrew, one of the unclean shepherd race, should have acted so.

[3] The word Memphis is the Coptic name for the city. The Copts are the modern representatives of the ancient Egyptians. The Arabic name is Menf or Menuf. These are only corruptions of Mennefer.

[4] Brugsch, *Geographische Inschriften*, Taf. 42, p. 1095.

[5] Beth, the Hebrew word for house, which has this wide signification, is very common in the inscriptions, having no doubt been adopted from the Semitic races of Canaan, with whom the Egyptians were frequently at war. It is found in the Egyptian

In the part of this fortress devoted to prisoners of state, and, as such, more strictly watched than any other, Joseph was imprisoned; ordinary criminals having their cells in other parts of the great building. Potiphar had no power over his life, for the old law of Egypt protected the slave thus far,[1] but he might have mutilated him, or have inflicted a thousand blows of the stick on him had he chosen; the fact that he did neither showing that, while he could not quite disbelieve his wife's story, he was

THE WHITE CASTLE AT MEMPHIS, IN WHICH JOSEPH WAS CONFINED. FROM THE FAMOUS MOSAIC PAVEMENT AT PRÆNESTE.

still so prepossessed in Joseph's favour that he left it to time to show how the truth really lay.

But even the suspicious eyes of the jailer soon saw the innocence of the prisoner, and hence he was ere long as high in favour with him as he had been with Potiphar, a result which, strangely enough, in the end brought about his deliverance.

lists of conquered Canaanitish cities, before the entrance of the Hebrews into Egypt. The other word, Sohar, is an Egyptian one.

[1] *Soury*, p. 165.

The king's cupbearer, and the chief of his bakers,[1] who had fallen into disgrace and were confined in the same building as Joseph, are shown by the Egyptian records to have been very high officials; for both had the responsible duty of protecting the king's life from poison. The post of the former, in particular, gave him constant and confidential access to the Pharaoh, who drank only what he received from his hand; while the other had not only to oversee the due supply of the court with the endless cakes and bakemeats in which Egyptians delighted, but to take care that they were not tampered with for traitorous ends.

Numerous inscriptions show the great importance attached by the Egyptians to dreams. In one, the Prince of Bachtan is recorded as having sent back to Egypt, in consequence of a dream, the god Chunsu, which the Pharaoh had sent him to cure his daughter.[2] Another states how King Menephtah had a dream before a battle, in which the god Ptah placed himself before him, and forbade him to advance.[3] An inscription discovered in the ruins of Napata, relates how the Pharaoh Miamun, in the year of his elevation to the throne of Egypt and Ethiopia, dreamed that he saw two serpents; one on his right hand and the other on his left. Awaking, he demanded that his wise men should come and interpret it on the moment, and this they did as follows: "You possess the south, and the north will submit to you. The diadems of the two will shine on your head, and you will rule over all the land in its length and in

[1] Both Potiphar and these two high officials are called eunuchs in the Hebrew, but this may have been merely a name of office.

[2] Stele of Rameses II. in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris.

[3] Chabas, *Études*, p. 214. Dümichen, *Historische Inschriften*, Taf. 3.

its breadth."[1] Dreams were regarded as sent by the god Thoth, and it was so great a matter to obtain them that recipes are still extant telling how they may be secured. It was natural, therefore, that the two disgraced officials should be greatly excited to find out the meaning of the supposed Divine communications that had been sent them. Cut off as they were by the prison walls from the priests who alone interpreted dreams, they would doubtless be only too glad to avail themselves of such irregular help as the presence of Joseph promised to afford.

Nothing could be more perfectly Egyptian than the cupbearer seeing in his sleep a vine with three branches, which presently blossomed, and then hung thick with ripened clusters; grapes from which he pressed into Pharaoh's cup. Even in the Old Empire, before the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, both the vine, and its juice used as a beverage, were familiar in the valley of the Nile. The tombs at the pyramids, which are much older than the time of Joseph, show not only richly laden vines in process of being picked into baskets,[2] but also the preparation of the grape juice, from its being pressed out of the clusters to the storing it in jars. At Beni Hassan, the tomb walls, which date from the Old Empire, show a very curious wine-press—a kind of sack fixed between upright posts and filled with grapes, which give off their juice into a vessel below on the sack being twisted round at one end, as women wring clothes in washing.[3] In the tombs at Thebes we have a picture of a great garden with a vineyard in the middle, in which a

[1] Soury, *Études sur les Religions*, p. 170. Lenormant, *La Divination*, p. 144.

[2] *Wilkinson*, vol. i. p. 41.

[3] *Wilkinson*, vol. i. p. 45.

boy scares off the birds from the ripe grapes, while men, singing as they work, tread out with their naked feet the clusters heaped into a huge vat. Overhead is a roof with hanging ropes, to which the men cling as they spring up and down on the yielding mass, the juice meanwhile flowing through two openings into jars on the ground. The master stands by while these are counted, entered in a book, and placed closely side by side in his cellar;[1] under the care of an image of the asp, or good demon, the protecting deity of the storeroom. That this juice, moreover, was used after fermentation as well as before, is only too clearly shown by the pictures of the feasts already mentioned, for even women are seen in them, with the doubled up lotos flower, the sign of drunkenness, hanging over their arm, or led out, offensively sick, by a female slave.[2] Nor are the men more temperate, for one is being carried away resting on the *heads* of three slaves, while another is being taken home most uncomfortably,—his head resting on the chest of one slave, his heels on the shoulders of another.[3] Workmen had rations of bread and wine allowed them, and there was a fixed allowance of two kinds for the priests. At the town of Bubastis, moreover, on the edge of Goshen, a yearly carnival at the great sanctuary of Pacht or Sechet attracted often seven hundred thonsand people, who drank more while it lasted than they did all the year besides.[4] Another similar festivity was held yearly at the temple of Hathor, the goddess of love, at Dendera,

[1] *Wilkinson*, vol. i. pp. 46. 47. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 53. Tristram's *Nat. Hist. of Bible*, p. 403. Michaelis, *Mos. Recht.*, vol. iv. p. 70.

[4] *Herodotus*, ii. 37. 60, 122. 168, 133. Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, pp. 18, 182, 480. *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 228, n. 132; vol. ii. p. 261, n. 73.

which bore the significant name of the drinking feast; the goddess herself bearing among other names that of "the goddess of drunkenness," or even "the drunken."[1] "The people of Denderah are drunk with wine," says an inscription, speaking of this feast.[2] Still more, Rameses III., in his record of his gifts to the gods, reminds those of Thebes that he gave them numberless vineyards, and many gardeners, from the captives of all lands, to cultivate them; and this he repeated to those of other parts. Nor did it hinder his adding gifts of nearly 200,000 jars of wine to the various temples.

Where wine and its use were divinely sanctioned, no class could well be prohibited from it. Drunkenness, indeed, was denounced as strongly as among ourselves. A drunkard was called "a temple without a god," or "a house without bread," and men were earnestly warned to shun indulgence. Yet too many drank till "they knew nothing, and could not even speak."[3] The kings, however, whose whole life was regulated by the priests, had their allowance of wine and the kinds permitted them fixed by these spiritual guides;[4] but a despot is not easily kept within bounds, however it may have been with the particular Pharaoh whose beverage in the cupbearer's dream, was only grape juice fresh from the cluster.[5] But that this is a literally correct trait of Egyptian life has been curiously illustrated by a text discovered by Ebers in the inscriptions of the Temple of Edfu, in which the king is seen standing, cup in hand,

[1] Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 326. *Records of Past*, vol. vi. pp. 23–70.
[2] Dümichen's *Bau-urkunde*, p. 29.
[3] *Papyrus*, quoted by Ebers, p. 326.
[4] *Königstochter*, vol. i. n. 39.
[5] The drinking cups of the rich Egyptians were often very costly. They were made of gold, alabaster, fine-glazed clay, or glass, and were often of the most elegant shapes.

while underneath are the words, "They press grapes into the water, and the king drinks." [1]

The dream of the chief baker is no less true to Egyptian life, even in its details. The "baskets of white bread," [2] find their justification alike in the pictures and inscriptions and in the remains found in the tombs. The temples received tributes of wheat from the earliest times, and the kings at their coronation cut off some ears of standing grain, and presented them to the gods, as the chief product of the land. Mummy wheat is also found constantly in the oldest tombs, and, strange to say, it has been found in the lake dwellings of Switzerland, which it could hardly have reached except through Phenician traders at

Egyptian Baking.

a and *e* are ovens. *a* is being cleaned out. That at *e* is kindled and ready for use, the flames coming out at the top. Ovens of this shape are still used in the East, and bear the same name—Tannur—as in Gen. xv. 17. See p. 342. They are sometimes made of brickwork, at others of earthenware, daubed with mud or plaster to retain the heat. The one at *e* illustrates Gen. xv. 17, the words "a smoking furnace" there, being literally "a smoking Tannur." At *d* bread is being baked on a plate of metal or in an open hollow pan, a method so simple that it is still much used by the Arabs and others for the thin cakes which they commonly make. At *b* and *c* men are making dough into cakes, and at *f* a man is bearing the cakes or loaves *on his head* to the oven.

[1] *Durch Gosen*, p. 480. Naville, *Textes relatifs au mythe d'Horus*, pl. 21, 23.

[2] Proper translation. Joseph plays on the words "lift up." The head of the baker was "lifted up" in a very different sense from that of the "butler."

Marseilles.[1] Indeed, huge wheatfields are seen in the pictures of the Egyptian heaven.

Even so trifling a detail as the bakemeats being said to have been carried on the head, is no less true to Egyptian life, for while the monuments show that men carried their burdens less often on their heads than otherwise, bakers are a marked exception. A papyrus of the age when the Hebrews were in Egypt, names four of the Pharaoh's bakers, of whom one is always called "the chief," and the importance of his office may be judged from the fact that no fewer than 114,064 loaves are said to have been delivered by him at a particular time to the royal storerooms.[2] Strange to say, we have also a notice of the bread made in the citadel where Joseph was confined, for one text speaks of "the bread baked in the White Castle" at Memphis.

The doom of the baker, to be beheaded and then have his body stuck upon a pole and left to be eaten by the birds, was the hardest that could be inflicted on an Egyptian; and shows special guilt, real or alleged, on the part of the unfortunate victim. To let the body be destroyed was fatal to all hopes of a happy eternity, for its preservation was essential to a continued existence after death. Beheading, preceded by beating with sticks, was a common punishment; but refusal of embalmment was only pronounced against extraordinary offenders.[3] To leave the body to be eaten by the dogs was the most terrible item in the punishment of the treacherous wife in the Tale of the Two Brothers.

The birthday of Pharaoh, on which the cup-bearer and the chief baker had their very different gaol discharge,

[1] Desor, *Pfahlbauten des Neuenburger Sees*, p. 43.
[2] Pleyte, *Le papyrus Rollin* (Paris, 1868).
[3] *Dillmann*, p. 424. Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 334.

was a great festivity on the Nile, for even to the common people the hour of birth, on which astrologers were always consulted where means allowed, was a time of supreme interest. Birthdays generally, were, among all classes in antiquity, kept with great rejoicing, especially those of kings. That of the king of Persia was known as the "perfect day," and an inscription of the time of the Exodus, tells us of Rameses II., that his birthday caused joy in heaven.[1] The priests of every class assembled in the temples, an amnesty was granted to prisoners, and a great feast was held, worthy of a monarch who was worshipped as a god by his subjects. Under colour of recalling the glories of the past year, the priesthood took the opportunity of renewing their hold on him by flattering but significant addresses; after which, surrounded by all his court and the dignitaries of the temples, he dispensed his grace or frowns as he thought fit.

The two dreams of Pharaoh are full of interest. The Nile, as elsewhere, is called only "the river,"[2] needing no other name in an Egyptian incident; just as the Euphrates is similarly honoured when the scene is in its neighbourhood.[3] In the first dream, seven "well favoured and fat fleshed" buffaloes—the Egyptian sacred number—which had been wallowing in the shallow water of the river's edge, come to the "lip" of the stream, to feed on the succulent reeds and sedge of the marshy brink, in which cattle still delight; but only to be eaten up by seven others, "ill favoured and lean fleshed," which presently come up, after them, out of the river. The wheat of the second

[1] Eber's *Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 22, n. 40; vol. ii. p. 257. Chabas, *Inscriptions des Mines d'Or*, p. 3. *Dillmann*, p. 424.

[2] The Egyptian word meaning this is used.

[3] See list of texts in Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, Appendix, p. 34.

dream, with seven ears on the one stalk, is the many eared variety, or mummy wheat, still grown in the Delta, and the east wind which blasted the second stalk and its ears, is the Khamsin, or burning south-east wind, which too often even at this day shrivels the growing corn, leaving it withered and empty. That it is said to blow from the east instead of the south-east is natural, for the Hebrews spoke only of "the four winds of the earth,"[1] and hence reckoned south-east as east, as the Greeks classed the east wind under the name of the southern, and the west under that of the north.

That the number of the cows should have been seven is a singular touch of true local colouring, recognised only within a few years, but affording a striking proof of the exactness of the whole incident in its illustration of Egyptian modes of thought and life. Isis is often seen associated with seven cows; a mystical number represented by the same word in Egyptian, Hebrew, and Sanscrit.[2] So, also, Osiris is at times represented as attended by seven cows, his wives.[3] At the summer solstice a cow was led seven times round his temple. That those in the dream should have been bathing in the Nile is, moreover, only a reproduction of paintings often seen on the monuments.[4]

Want and abundance depend absolutely in Egypt, to-day, as of old, on the rise of the Nile. The culture of the land must ever go hand in hand with the irrigation of the soil by the periodical flood, which takes the place at once of rain and of manure. The yearly rise of the stream had, indeed, long before Joseph's day, been the direct source of Egyptian civilization; for the necessity of an

[1] Rev. vii. 1.
[2] Egyptian *Sefeh*, Hebrew *Seba*, Sanscrit *Sapt*.
[3] De Rougé, *Revue Archæologique* (Feb., 1869), p. 94.
[4] *Wilkinson*, vol. i. p. 102.

extended system of canals, and of a supervision of the boundary marks of individual properties, often effaced by the inundations, first enforced attention to astronomy as the only guarantee of correct measurement of time; and also to architecture and geometry, by the help of which strong dams could be built and a network of canals led off from the central stream. And it is a striking fact that the only part of the Egyptian religion received through the whole country, and not in some localities only—the worship of Isis and Osiris, with the gods and myths related to them—was closely connected with the phenomena of the Nile. In its rise it was called Osiris—the Fructifier of the Land—and was typified by the male ox;[1] while in its overflow it bore the name of his wife and sister, Isis—the Fruitful Mother, or of Hathor,—the goddess of fruitfulness, both of whom were worshipped under the symbol of the cow, or with the head of a cow, as is constantly seen on the monuments. "Among the stars," says Plutarch, "Sirius is consecrated to Isis, because it brings moisture. As the Nile, according to the Egyptians, is an emanation of Osiris, they believe also that their land is the body of Isis; that is, the part of it enriched by the river when it overflows. From this union Horus is born, and this Horus is the season or the temperature of the air which quickens and nourishes all things."[2] When, therefore, the kine rose out of the bed of the Nile, it was apparently almost inevitable to recognise in them the symbol of Isis-Hathor—that is, of the fertility of the land.

It is, indeed, striking to notice how thoroughly the Egyptian world realized its dependence on its great river. Fixed standards to note its periodical rise had in the earliest ages been set up in its course, from Nubia to the Delta; and from these the people were wont, each summer,

[1] *Dillmann*, p. 426. [2] *Isis et Osiris.*

to read their future. From December to the end of June no noticeable change took place in the stream, and the images of Isis-Hathor were draped in black, as mourning for the dryness of the soil. But for the seven months from July to December their images, in gala robes, were carried round, each month, in solemn procession, and all was rejoicing. At Memphis, Joseph's town, as elsewhere, the one great topic of each summer and autumn must have been the daily reports of the Nilometer of the city, which seems to have been especially noted; the estimates of the height of inundations which have come down to us from antiquity seeming to have been taken from it. In the time of Herodotus, some 1,300 years after Joseph, 26 feet of flood, only, were needed to secure a plentiful harvest; but the rise of the land, through the deposit of Nile mud, now requires that the waters reach a height of 39 feet to cause an adequate inundation;[1] a result effected by dams and barrage.

The second dream is only the complement of the first, and must have been full of meaning to a land like Egypt, which grew the heaviest wheat in the world, and yet often had fields of empty ears when the khamsin had been blowing; a land which believed that in Elysium, the blessed did not pass their existence in enervating rest, but rejoiced in richly watered cornfields which they themselves sowed and reaped; where the kings bore ears of wheat in their hands at high festivals; where crowns of wheat-ears were put on deified princesses; and where the harvest goddess could be spoken of as she who filled the garners with grain.[2]

[1] Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, art. Nil. Ebers (*Ægypten*, p. 355) says, that from 22 to 26 feet was the rise required in antiquity.

[2] Ebers' *Ægypten*, p. 360. *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 198. The Nile begins to rise at Memphis at the end of June,

The alarm of the Pharaoh at such dreams, followed by his summoning "all the magicians and wise men of Egypt," is true alike to the importance attached to dreams by the Egyptians, and to the arrangements of the court at Memphis. A council of priests of various orders were in constant attendance upon the king, to guide every act of his daily life, and to interpret the will of the gods; as shown in omens, visions, or signs of the heavens. Every large temple had its college of priests, over whom one presided as chief; and each class of the priesthood in these colleges had, under this head dignitary, a president of its own. From among the high priests, moreover, the foremost men were chosen as a hierarchy for all Egypt, and of these a selected number, the most eminent in dignity, lived in the royal palace to attend on the king; one, selected from them, acting apparently as sovereign pontiff of all Egypt.

When, however, weighty questions, such as that of these dreams, had to be solved, this standing council of high ecclesiastics, which seems to have been twenty in number, was augmented by the heads of the great temples throughout the country, and the united body were invited to aid the king in his perplexity. There were many classes of priests, but only two are named in Genesis[1] on this occasion—the Hachamim, or wise men; and the

and continues rising for three months. At the end of September it commences to retire, and the land dries during October, which is the month for sowing. The harvest begins with the opening of March, and the river keeps shrinking till the end of June, when it again rises. Brockhaus' *Lexicon*, vol. i. *Ægypten*, p. 356. Brugsch, however, says that the Nile begins to cover Lower Egypt with its waters in the two months of January and February. *Oriental Congress* (1874), p. 245.

[1] The words used in the Hebrew are the exact Egyptian terms

Hartuimmim,[1] a title not yet very clear; but these are doubtless named as including the council as a whole. They did not affect to speak by direct inspiration in giving their interpretations, but confined themselves to consulting the holy books, and to performing magical rites; and deep, no doubt, would be the study of the one, and abundant the performance of the other, at such a crisis. That Joseph, after their failure, should have at once given so just a solution, without having any holy books, but in the far higher way of direct inspiration, explains the reverence in which he was forthwith held.

The recurrence of years of famine in Egypt, from a failure in the rise of the Nile, receives vivid corroboration from the monuments and inscriptions. Thus, in the tombs of Beni Hassan, Ameni, a high civil and military officer of King Usurtasen I. of the twelfth dynasty, under which it is generally thought Abraham visited Egypt, records of himself in posthumous praise, on the walls of his burial chamber: "For years I exercised my power as governor in the nome of Mah. All the works for the palace of the king were placed in my hands. The chiefs of the temples of the gods of the nome of Mah gave me thousands of *bulls* (*so*) with their calves. I was praised on the part of the royal palace because of the yearly delivery of cows in milk. I gave up all their products to the palace, and I kept back nothing for myself. The whole nome of Mah worked for me with multiplied activity. But I never afflicted the child of the poor. I have not ill-treated the widow. I never disturbed any owner of land. I never drove away the herdsmen. I never took away his men for my works from the master who had only five. There were none wretched in my time. The hungry did not exist in my time, *even when there were years of famine.*

[1] *Ges. Thes.*, col. i. p. 1194.

For, behold, I had all the fields of the district of Mah ploughed, up to its frontiers, both south and north. Thus I found bread for the inhabitants, and gave them the food which they produced. There were no hungry people in it. I gave equally to the widow and the married woman. I did not prefer a great personage to a humble man in all that I gave away; and when the inundations of the Nile were great, he who sowed was master of his crop. I kept back nothing for myself from the revenues of the field."[1]

"Years of famine" had thus scourged the land generations before those of the Pharaoh's dreams; but an old inscription, whose author must, in the opinion of Brugsch, have been a contemporary of Joseph, brings before us, it may be, the very calamity to which the young Hebrew owed his wonderful change of fortune. One of the tombs at El Kuh has revealed this strange relic of the remote past, which is interesting on more grounds than one. On the wall opposite the entrance to the tomb, the dead man's story proceeds:—"The chief at the table of princes, Baba, the risen-again, speaks thus: I loved my father, I honoured my mother; my brothers and my sisters loved me. I stepped out of the door of my house with a benevolent heart. I stood there with refreshing hand, and splendid were the preparations I collected for the feast-day. Mild was my heart, free from noisy anger. The gods bestowed on me a rich portion on earth. The city wished me health, and a life full of freshness. I punished the evil doers. The children who stood opposite me in the town,[2] during the days I lived, were, small as well as great, sixty; there were prepared for them as many beds, as many chairs, as many tables. They consumed

[1] Brugsch's *History of Egypt*, vol. i. p. 137.

[2] His own family.

120 epha of doura,[1] the milk of 3 cows, 52 goats and 9 she asses; a hin of balsam, and 2 jars of oil.

"My speech may appear untrue to some, but I call to witness the god Month that it is true. I had all this prepared in my house. In addition, I gave cream in the pantry and beer in the cellar in a more than sufficient number of hin measures.

"I collected the harvest, for I was a friend of the harvest god. I was watchful at the time of sowing, and now *when a famine arose, lasting many years, I issued corn to the city to each hungry person.*"[2]

Such famines, extending through a number of consecutive seasons, owing to the deficiency of water in the Nile, were very rare; indeed, history knows only the instance related in Genesis; and hence, as he whose story has been quoted was a contemporary of Joseph, we seem to have here an independent notice of the very dearth connected with his narrative.

The hasty summons of Joseph from the prison, at the suggestion of the cup-bearer, to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams, is no less true to Egyptian customs than the rest of the narrative. Notwithstanding the urgency, he had to "shave himself," and change his garments, before he could "come in unto Pharaoh;" a necessity explained by the fact that no one could appear before the majesty of Egypt unless he were, in all respects, ceremonially clean; which included the shaving of the whole body, careful bathing, and a perfectly clean suit of raiment.

[1] Dhourra, still a common food in Africa, is a kind of millet. It is only given in this country to birds; but is often used, when ground, to make sweet cakes, in Egypt and elsewhere. It is a kind of cultivated grass, and it is grown in the Holy Land for use as bread. *Tristram*, p. 470.

[2] Brugsch, vol. i. pp. 263–4.

The duty he was to perform was, besides, a priestly one, and the very word for priest, in Egyptian, means "the pure" or "clean." All priests were required to be absolutely hairless, as a part of their purity, the only exception being when they were mourning for death; and, indeed, all Egyptians who wished to be "clean" were required to undergo the same strange purification.[1] Wigs were, therefore, worn by priests and laymen alike, to cover the smoothly shaven skull, and false beards were equally common; an unshorn chin marking a foreigner or a person of humble position or doubtful life. The great masses of hair we see on the heads of priests and kings in the paintings are, hence, only the triumphs of art, and the formal beards on the statues are equally artificial. Joseph would be required to submit to this priestly law; for the ghostly council round Pharaoh, who himself had to be admitted into the priestly caste before he could ascend the throne, dictated every particular of his daily life, and insisted on their rules being carried out to the least detail by every one who approached him. The repeated washing of the whole person before an audience could be granted, was no less imperative, and clothes fresh from the washers must be put on. We read, in fact, of the "washermen" of Pharaoh and of their "chief;" a dignitary of no mean rank in a country where the rules of ceremonial purity were so exacting. Joseph must have exchanged the simple blouse which he, like all other common people, wore in prison, for rich garments, provided for him, before he entered the chamber of presence.[2]

[1] *Herod.*, ii. 37, 41, 47, 77.

[2] *Riehm*, p. 761. *Dillmann*, p. 427. A letter of a scribe which has survived, describing the troubles of each position of life, says: "The barber shaves even till night. He has no rest except

It was no light matter for one outside the priestly caste to venture to interpret a dream, much less that of the Pharaoh; for a slave who busied himself with the secret knowledge reserved by the hierarchy to themselves, was liable to death. It must, therefore, have been an anxious moment for Joseph, when he waited to see how his interpretation was received; but its correctness was so instantly apparent, and the policy recommended so sound and shrewd, that the result was not for a moment doubtful. With the suddenness of despotic countries, the slave of the moment before found himself raised to be Grand Vizier of the whole land. Pharaoh and his court, recognising, as they did, the interpretation of dreams as a divine gift, and tracing all insight into the future as sent from above, could have no one so fit to put in the highest authority as a man thus inspired.

He was therefore set at once over both palace and nation; the whole population being placed under his orders;[1] the only honour reserved by Pharaoh for himself being that he occupied the throne. The formal investiture is illustrated in each particular by the monuments. The royal signet-ring transferred from the hand of the Pharaoh to that of Joseph was his warrant, as prime minister of the land; clothing of fine cotton and linen,[2] the dress of the

when he eats. He goes from house to house to seek custom. He wears out his arms to fill his stomach." *Maspero*, p. 123. A bronze razor, preserved in the Louvre, is of the same shape as ours, and its edge is still keen. De Rougé, *Notice des Monuments Egyptiens* (1855), p. 78. To be called bald was an insult among the Jews (2 Kings ii. 23).

[1] *Dillmann*, p. 428. The above is the sense of Gen. xli. 40.

[2] The word includes both. The delicacy of the best Egyptian linen may be judged from the fact, that whereas the finest linen in India—the finest now in the world—has only 100 threads in an inch of the warp and 84 in the woof, that of Egypt has at

priests, the highest class in Egypt, marked his adoption into the priestly order; and the special golden neck-chain put on him was the official sign to all, of his authority.[1] Forthwith, the second royal chariot, set at his disposal, carries him through the streets of Memphis, to make known his elevation; heralds running before it with the cry, Abrek, abrek—"bow the knee," "cast yourselves down" before him.[2] The Arabs, strange to say, still use the cry, Abrok, when they are about to alight from their camels or asses.[3]

The new Egyptian name given to Joseph has received special illustration from Brugsch. He reads it Zap-u-nt-p-aa-Auk,[4] which is not far from the Psonthomphanēk of

times 140 in the warp and about 64 in the woof. *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. p. 77.

[1] Gesenius aptly says *the* Chain, as we say *the* Order. *Thesaurus*, p. 361.

[2] The words, Gen. xli. 40, "According unto thy word shall all my people be ruled," are literally, "thy mouth shall all the people kiss." The phrase, perhaps, comes from the practice in the East of kissing anything received from a superior, and pressing it to the forehead, to imply obedience at the risk of life. See Rosenmüller, *Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 192; also Gesenius, *Thesaurus*, p. 923 b; and Wilkinson's *Anct. Egyp.*, vol. ii. p. 203. But in ancient Egypt it was, in effect, the designation to supreme office, for the title of "the grand mouth" was that of a high functionary of the Pharaohs. We read of one who was "grand mouth to the whole land," and as such, the officer to whom all authority was confided. And in the same way, when Set-Nekt wished to give Rameses III. a share in his power, he raised him to the dignity of "grand mouth of the land of Egypt."*

[3] Chabas, *Études sur l'Antiquité historique*, pp. 408–412.

[4] Brugsch notices that the name in the Bible, Zaphnatpaneakh, corresponds "letter for letter" with this. Rosenmüller and others explain it as a pompous title, meaning "Saviour of the

* Chabas, *Récherches sur la XIX. Dynastie.*

the Greek Bible; and translates it as meaning, in the mode used by the Greeks of the age of the Ptolemies, "the nomarch of the Sethroitic nome;" that is, of the district in the extreme north-east of Egypt. In the mouth of an Egyptian of Joseph's time, however, he tells us, it was equivalent to "the governor of the abode of Him who lives," and he explains this as a reference to the god Ankh, with whose name that conferred on Joseph concludes. This deity, we are told, was the same as the god Thom, who had splendid temples at On and Heliopolis, close to Memphis, and was also the tutelar god of Succoth, in Joseph's new district. Ankh, however, was especially the god of the town of Pi-Thom, and bore the name of the "great God"—the word Ankh itself meaning "Life"—"He who lives," or "the Living (one)." Can it be that this is an unconscious recognition of the true God, lingering still in Egypt, as it had survived in Abraham's day, in the instances of Abimelech and Melchisedek, in Canaan? As Brugsch says: "It is the only time a like name for a god, which appears to exclude the idea of idolatry, is met with in Egyptian texts." Nor would it be strange if it actually referred to Jehovah, since the eastern side of the Delta had for ages been more or less peopled by Semitic settlers, or wandering shepherds; who might well have brought with them the holy tradition of the Living God, which was still faintly acknowledged in their first seat, beyond the Euphrates. That Joseph should have been set specially over a district of which the tutelary god was "the Living One," is, at least, noteworthy. It is singular, moreover, to find that a serpent, to which the Egyptian texts gives the title "the magni-

world," but the Egyptians called Egypt "the world." *Ges. Thes.*, p. 1181 b. *Das A. und N. Morgenland*, vol. i. p. 195. *Dillmann*, p. 229. *Congress of Orientalists* (1874), p. 269.

ficent," "the splendid," was the living symbol of Ankh, for this seems to transport us to the scene in the desert, when Moses was told to make the brazen serpent, and to connect itself with the fond superstition which made Israel burn incense to that sacred relic, till Hezekiah put down this serpent worship by destroying its object.[1]

Joseph himself tells us that his elevation had made him an Ab en Pirao[2]—which is wrongly translated in our version—"a father to Pharaoh," and that he was "Lord[3] of all his house." The former title is a strictly Egyptian one, and is often found in the ancient papyri, as that conferred on the supreme officials of the court. Several of the texts preserved in the British Museum, written by the sacred scribes and officers of the Pharaohs, allude to these Ab en Pirao; their high rank being vividly shown by the profound respect with which they are mentioned. An illustrious marriage alone was now required to make the dignities of the new favourite complete, and this was presently arranged by the Pharaoh himself. Asenath, "devoted to Neith," the daughter of Potipherah, "devoted to the sun god," a priest of the great university temple of the Sun at On, close to Memphis, became his wife, and thus he was finally incorporated into the highest class in the land, the priesthood.

The Pharaoh under whom Joseph was thus advanced is believed by most scholars to have been one of the foreign race, known as the Hyksos, or Shepherd Kings, who for a long period held sway in Egypt, after they had

[1] Brugsch, in *Congress of Orientalists* (1874), p. 269. *History* vol. ii. p. 349.

[2] Gen. xlv. 8.

[3] Lord = *Adōn*, a Semitic word adopted by the Egyptians as the title of the "captain of a district;" then, for the chief officer of a palace. *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 221.

overthrown the native dynasty. Canon Cook thinks, indeed, Joseph was brought to the Nile before their successful invasion, while Lepsius would place his arrival under Sethi I., the Sesostris of the Greeks, the first native ruler after their expulsion, some centuries later. But the weight of probability seems to point to his having found the Hyksos already on the throne, when he was sold to Potiphar; the friendly relations of the court to his family, contrasted with the changed bearing to his descendants, appearing to suit better with the later Hyksos period, as followed by the revolution which drove out the Shepherd Kings, than with any other.[1]

The strange story of these Semitic invaders must be left to a future chapter, but one or two points fall properly to be noticed here. Joseph seems to have been brought to Egypt about 1730 years before Christ,[2] and tradition has assigned the period of his glory to the reign of the Shepherd King, Aphobis,[3] who preceded the revolution which expelled his race by only a few years. Like other Asiatics, he had imported and promoted the worship of a favourite god. The Semitic immigration, which for ages had prevailed in the eastern part of the Delta, and had, indeed, made it possible for the Hyksos to seize the Egyptian throne, by the gradual preponderance in that region of warlike tribes of their race, had also led to a gradual blending of the customs, and even of the religions, of the Egyptians and of these foreigners. Syrian idols were introduced and largely worshipped, in the end even, by the native population, and of these Sutech was the chief.[4] This deity the Hyksos chose as the supreme

[1] Joseph, in *Riehm*. *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 264. *Maspero*, p. 174
[2] *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 260. *Maspero*, p. 174.
[3] *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 260.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 211.

god of their newly-acquired country, building at Zoan, Tanis, and Avaris, grand temples to him, adorned with sphinxes, a strange human-faced animal form introduced by them—and rejecting the worship of any other god of the land.[1] This Sutech, or Set, known also as Nub, or "the golden," was simply the Syrian god Baal, or more particularly, Baal Zapuna, the Baal-Zephon, or god of "the North Wind"[2] of Scripture, if Brugsch be correct.[3] In this Sutech, no less eminent an authority than Dr. Birch has recognised "the One only and true God, as distinct from all other deities;" but this attractive fancy has, it is to be feared, little to support it. On the contrary, Sutech-Baal, appears in Egypt as the principle of Evil, the enemy of light and of good in the seen and unseen worlds.[4] He seems, in fact, to have been the same as Baal-Typhon,[5]—with which, indeed, the name Zephon sounds very much alike,—and if so, he was pre-eminently the god of darkness and of evil, to whom the unfruitful sea, the wild desert, and the storm were the congenial home. His idol was painted red, and human sacrifices were offered to it.[6] After the Hyksos were expelled, we find the dynasty of Rameses adopting this repulsive worship, but with the change of honouring Sutech as the god of victory; which he already was, in one aspect, among the Hittites of Syria.[7] But the popular estimate of his attributes is better seen, in his having the hideous river horse, or hippopotamus ascribed to him as his sacred emblem, and in the myth of his being destroyed at last in this form by the god Horus, or Light, in the

[1] *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 239.
[2] Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, p. 511.
[3] *Brugsch*, vol. i. p. 242.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 236.
[5] Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, p. 510.
[6] Plutarch, *Isis et Os.*, 32
[7] See his name as the god of many Canaanite cities, in the treaty made by them with Rameses II. *Brugsch*, vol. ii. p. 72.

shape of the winged disk of the sun.[1] The idea of his representing Jehovah worship must, therefore, we fear, be abandoned, however pleasant it would have been to have recognised in the friend of Joseph a worshipper of the God of the Hebrews.

Twelve or thirteen years had passed since Joseph was "stolen from the land of the Hebrews," but he had now reached the height of prosperity, after vicissitudes such as could only happen in an Eastern despotism. He was still a young man of thirty, and found himself a member of the royal order of the priesthood, with the chain of high office round his neck, and the signet ring of the Pharaoh on his hand—the virtual ruler of the greatest country of the then known world.[2] Two sons born to him helped to efface the bitter memories of the past—Manasseh, "he who makes me forget" my sorrow; and Ephraim, "double fruitfulness," for "God had made him fruitful in the land of his affliction." With his policy in reference to the famine, it is hard, however, entirely to agree; for though the impost of twenty per cent. laid by him on the produce of the land might not be oppressive in a country so rich as Egypt, it seems, to modern notions at least, very hard to have forced the peasantry to sell their property of every kind, and even their liberty, for food, before this arrangement was made.[3]

[1] Ebers' *Durch Gosen* p. 510.

[2] *Ægyp. Königstochter*, vol. i. p. 232.

[3] The taxes in Turkey are 50 per cent. of the produce, and in Persia 75 per cent. *Dillmann*, p. 459. In chap. xlvii. 21, the Sept., Sam. and Vulg. read thus: "As for the people, *he made slaves of them*," etc. A parallel to the elevation of Joseph has been detected by some in that of Sineha, the fugitive Egyptian who, after having risen to greatness among the Amu, returned to Egypt, and was greatly honoured by the reigning Pharaoh. But he was an Egyptian, not a Semite. (*Records of the Past*, vol.

That the sons of Jacob should have gone down to Egypt for corn when the famine began to press, marks a great progress from the time when Abraham had himself, with all his tribe, to move to the Nile under similar circumstances. Trade in corn had apparently not then been established between Canaan and Egypt; now it appears in full operation. Joseph, so long lost, is naturally not recognised in his Egyptian splendour and in his change from youth to manhood, but his brethren still wear the old dress of shepherds, and are easily remembered. Amidst them, however, there is no Benjamin. Have they murdered or sold Rachel's only other child, his one full brother? Alike to make them feel something of the anguish they had once caused himself, and to discover the truth as to his brother, Joseph could have taken no better course than to charge them with being spies. An invasion from the north-east was the standing danger of Egypt, to ward off which the eastern

vi. p. 131.) An inscription in the Museum of Turin furnishes a curious illustration of Joseph's history, in at least one particular. It is the funeral record of one Beka—"The Overseer of the Public Granaries, and Controller of Upper and Lower Egypt." The name Beka means "servant," or "slave." He preserved the favour of the king to the last. The inscription tells his own opinions of his virtues and is interesting on many grounds. He had been just and true, and without malice. From his birth to his death he had always been truthful. "So I have heard," says he naïvely. Love to his father and mother dwelt in his heart, nor had he ever forgotten his obligations to them from his tenderest childhood. Living in the court he had gained the affection alike of the king and of his courtiers. Strange to say, there are no allusions to the gods of Egypt, in his inscription, such as are generally the staple of such compositions. He seems to have had a simple creed—to have God in his heart, and to seek to know and follow His commands.*

* Chabas, *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. v. pp. 459, 464.

border of Egypt had been defended by the great fortified wall, from Suez to the Mediterranean; as China has been protected from the Tartars in a similar way. One, at least, must be left behind, a prisoner; while they go back with corn, and return, bringing their younger brother. That Joseph should swear by the life of Pharaoh, is strictly Oriental. The Egyptian king was worshipped as a god, and an oath by his life, like that of the Persians "by the king's head," would be reckoned more binding than any other. Strangely enough, the form was still in use in Egypt in the twelfth century, under the Caliphs, and was regarded as equivalent to pledging one's own life on his keeping his oath; for to break it was death.[1] Egyptian was spoken at court even under the Hyksos, so that an interpreter was required, and in the end nine of the brethren are allowed to return; Simeon, the second eldest, being left in prison as a hostage, rather than Reuben, the eldest, whose kind feeling in seeking, long before, to save his brother's life was thus remembered.

The gifts sent with Benjamin to the unknown dignitary at Pharaoh's Court, to win his favour, mark an Eastern custom still in force, never to approach the great without a present. But nothing could well be simpler than the offering of Jacob, of "the best fruits," or, as the word means, "the song" of the land—a little balm from Gilead, or rather from the hot valley of Jericho, a little dĕbash, or thickened syrup of grapes,[2] some gum tragacanth, some gum of the cistus or ladanum, some pistacio nuts

[1] *Rosenmüller*, vol. i. p. 201. *Michaelis*, vol. v. p. 217.

[2] Not honey of bees, but what the Arabs still call *dibs*, a thickened syrup of grapes, still a great favourite in Egypt, to which three hundred camels' loads of it are sent each year from Hebron.*

* Delitzsch, *Die Genesis*, vol. ii. p. 106.

from the terebinth tree, and some almonds. Cultivated fruits had not, apparently, as yet been grown in Canaan, so that only natural products could be offered.[1] The grief of Jacob at losing Rachel's only remaining child, the eager pledges of Reuben and Judah to bring him back safely, and the double money to pay for the last and the present food, are natural touches that speak to the heart even now. But a new chapter in the strange drama was about to open, for on reaching Egypt, with Benjamin, they were presently invited to the great man's palace.

The mansions of noble Egyptians stood within high walls, decorated with paintings; the entrance being by a huge gate, flanked at each side by lofty poles, from which floated long streamers. The gate opened on a wide paved court-yard, along the sides of which ran covered walks, supported on slender, painted wooden columns. A second high doorway at the back of this court led into the vast gardens of the mansion, with rows of fruit trees and trellised vines, clumps of shrubs, beds of flowers, and of vegetables. Palms, sycamores, and acacia trees, figs, pomegranates, and jasmine, grew in luxuriance; a large tank in the middle of the grounds supplying abundant water for the roots of the trees and for the plants, and numerous gardeners seeing that all were duly cared for, and that the canals, which led the water from the Nile, were kept full by the labours of oxen, which turned water-wheels into them day and night.

At one side of this paradise rose the mansion, sometimes of vast extent but only of one storey high, at others of several storeys. Almost all the rooms on the ground floor had separate doors, opening into a verandah, supported by coloured wooden columns, and running the

[1] Tristram, *Nat. Hist.*, pp. 336, 362, 365, 393, 410, 458.

whole length of the garden side of the house. A long row of storerooms, running at a right angle to this, closed the view behind, and hid away the garden produce, the wine jars, and the larder of the establishment.[1] The outside of the mansion, like the enclosing wall, was decorated with paintings or ornamental designs.

The furniture was in keeping with this exterior. Couches, sofas, and lounges, often of precious woods encrusted with ebony or ivory and set off with gilding, showed exquisite artistic skill in their fanciful shapes, like those of lions, sphinxes, horses, and other animals, and by their elaborate carving; and there was a profusion of tables of all sizes and designs, and elegantly carved chairs, of different kinds—at times of ivory, but always costly and beautiful. On the sideboard, tables, and consoles, stood artistically-worked Syrian drinking vessels of many forms: beautiful vases of gold, bronze, rock crystal or other precious material, filled with flowers, were everywhere; rare perfumes rose from alabaster cups, and the foot sank in the thick pile of the carpets that covered the floors,[2] or trod on the skins of lions and other ferocious beasts.

The attendance was appropriately magnificent. Troops of slaves and officials ministered to every real or imaginary want of their lord. A band of priests took charge of the religious rites of the household, supported by scribes and astrologers. A confidential slave reigned over all the more private details of the establishment; his authority marked, as he daily went his rounds, by the curved baton of office which he carried. There were storekeepers,

[1] Ebers' *Uarda*, vol. i. p. 123.

[2] *Uarda*, p. 137. *Eine Ægyptische Königstochter*, vol. i. pp. 14, 206. *Vigouroux*, vol. ii. p. 121. *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. pp. 136 ff. Lepsius, *Denkmäler*, vol. ii. p. 102.

chair-bearers, basket-makers, gardeners, bailiffs, glass-blowers, gold-workers, tailors, barbers, shepherds, porters, hunters, fishermen, men for taking charge of the road; washermen in numbers, under a head washerman, to take charge of the linen; carpenters, potters, wood-cutters, bakers, and many more. Female slaves spun the flax into thread, prepared the skeins, and finally wove the linen of the household; and a whole multitude of others of both sexes had duties either outside the mansion or within it. The acrobat and the dancer, the harpist and the singer, and many others, strove to while away the dulness of their lord's evenings. His chief glory, however, was in his farm, with its flocks and herds, his household, with its throng of slaves and artizans, and in his luxurious yachts on the sacred river. The use of the horse had been introduced by the Hyksos, and doubtless in Joseph's day high dignitaries already boasted of their studs and chariots. The cat purred at the great man's hearth, the dog ran at his side, and he amused himself with pet apes. Oxen of different kinds fed in his meadows, and he hunted the gazelle and the antelope. Goat, veal, and beef, varied by hyæna, graced his table, but he shuddered like a Jew at the idea of pork, and cared little for mutton. Ducks, geese, doves, and pigeons, wild and tame, were as common as now, and domestic fowl abounded on every side. His bread was generally of barley, varied by biscuits and pastry. Grapes, figs, and dates furnished his desserts; and wine and beer his drink. Dressed in pure white linen, he wore only sandals or walked barefoot; but gold collars, bracelets and anklets, showed his wealth, and he carried a wand for dignity.

Accustomed to the simple life of the tent, the splendour of such a dignitary must have awed his shepherd brothers, but their wonder, dashed with fear, must

have been deepened when they were invited to eat with him; for the state of an Egyptian Grand Vizier was something of which till then they could have had no idea. The dining chamber was a decorated hall, resplendent with colour and gilding, and furnished with regal magnificence.

Slaves laid garlands of roses round the shoulders of the guests, and put wreaths of lotus blossoms on their heads, while others handed them wine and food from sideboards loaded with every delicacy and decked with flowers. Choirs of musicians during the dessert entered the chamber and played on harps, lutes, small drums and flutes, the conductor beating time with his hands, and the company joining with measured clappings,[1] while female dancers added to their delight.[2] It may be that Joseph, though he had adopted Egyptian manners, avoided compliance with some particulars, but, as a whole, the iron force of prescription in so formal a country would doubtless make his mansion very much like that of others of his rank.

The delight of Joseph at the sight of Benjamin is heightened by the proof it gives that his brothers have not at least been guilty of a double crime. With true Eastern haste the creatures to be eaten at noon are cooked at once on being killed; water is brought to each guest that he may wash his feet, as Egyptian politeness demanded;[3] the brethren bow themselves to the earth in Eastern fashion before the great man when he appears, having first made ready their gift to present to him. Joseph's eating at a table apart, as required by his priestly caste and high dignity, which would not allow him to eat with the laity; the placing another table

[1] *Uarda*, vol. ii. pp. 80–96. [2] *Vigouroux*, vol. ii. p. 127.
[3] *Wilkinson*, vol. i. p. 76.

for his Egyptian guests, who, though not of priestly rank, could not sit with "unclean" foreigners, are true to the old life they depict. Egypt was the Japan or China of early antiquity; shut out from intercourse with other countries as much as possible, and regarding their people, however cultured, as impure barbarians. The priests would eat or drink nothing that came from abroad, and, like the Hindoos with Europeans now, no Egyptian would use a dish or knife that had been touched by a foreigner.[1]

Joseph's sending food from his table[2] to his brethren, and marking his favour for Benjamin by honouring him with a succession of special delicacies, was characteristic of antiquity. In the same way Ulysses is honoured at a feast with the long chine of a white-toothed swine, and so also is Ajax;[3] and guests of Orientals, where specially welcome, are similarly distinguished to the present day.

The mixture of kindness and the reverse, in Joseph's subsequent act of again filling the sacks of his brethren with wheat and returning their money; but at the same time putting his "divining bowl" into the sack of Benjamin; appears to have its only explanation in the desire to test in some decisive way the feeling which the ten sons of other mothers bore to the one of their number dearest to him as the son of Rachel; a result on which, doubtless, his future treatment of them depended. That he should have a divining bowl at all, is, however, out of keeping with his simple faith in the God of his

[1] *Strabo*, xvii. 1, 6. *Herod.*, ii. 41.

[2] Kings and priests ate flesh in Egypt, daily, if they liked. (*Herod.*, ii. 37, 77.) The priests, however, abstained from mutton and pork, and some of them, like the Brahmins, were vegetarians. *Dillmann*, p. 440. *Michaelis*, vol. iv. p. 188.

[3] *Odyss.*, xiv. 437. *Ilias*, vii. 321.

father, in reverence towards whom he had, as a child, seen all such idolatrous and superstitious associations buried with contempt, beneath the terebinths of Shechem. But in so early an age, and amidst such a religious system as that of Egypt, entire superiority to superstition must have been difficult, while it might well consist with substantial fidelity to his hereditary faith, for when has superstition not found some hold even in the later ages of the Church?

The practice of divining by bowls of water or other fluid is of immemorial antiquity, and was widely spread, for we find traces of it in ancient India, Greece, Rome, and Egypt, as well as among the Hebrews, in this case of Joseph. Some terra cotta vases in the British Museum, brought from Babylonia, and written over, inside, with magical spells, may perhaps even show, in the mixture of Hebrew, Rabbinical and Chaldee words in these incantations, that such a form of divination obtained among the Eastern dispersion to a late period.

The word used by Joseph's steward for divining is itself peculiar, meaning as it does, "to utter a low, whispering, hissing sound," and hence "to practise enchantment by uttering magic spells,[1] which sorcerers did in whispers and mutterings. The name "kondu," given in the Greek Bible for the bowl is also curious, for it has become naturalized in Arabic and Persian, and was the very word for the mystical saucers or dishes, in the shape of an Egyptian lotus flower, used by the ancient Indian priests in religious ceremonies, and also in Egypt itself, at the beginning of the third century of our era for similar purposes. Indeed, Norden,

[1] "Nahash." It is used twice in Gen. xliv. 5, 15, and also, by Laban, Gen. xxx. 27. The name for a serpent, from its hissing, is Nahash.

the German traveller,[1] tells us that he saw a kind of fortune telling there, last century, by dishes of water, and Lane, in his "Modern Egyptians,"[2] describes a form of pretended sorcery by looking into a drop of ink lying in the palm of the hand, as surviving still.

The modes in which these bowls were used in ancient times were doubtless various. One was by filling them with water and then putting into it small plates of silver or gold, or precious stones, with the likeness of the inquirer on them, the answer being reckoned good or bad according as the image was refracted on the surface.[3] Another was, by fastening a ring to a thread and hanging it over the water in the bowl, the oracle revealing itself by the taps of the ring on this or that part of the bowl, and also by their frequency or strength.[4] These were the modes known to Pliny. Psellus, a great theological writer of the Greek Church,[5] tells us that "divination by bowls was invented by the Assyrians, whose cleverness (in the use of them) was extreme." "The bowl was filled

[1] Norden's *Voyage d'Égypte et de Nubie* (1752–55), vol. iii. p. 98. Norden says he had sent to the local dignitary with the usual presents, to ask protection and to show the firman of the Porte as his authority for wishing to visit the country. But the envoy was met by the answer, strikingly like that of Joseph to his brethren: "The firman of the Porte is nothing to me. I am, in this part, myself the Grand Seignior. I know already what kind of folks you are. *I have consulted my cup*, and I find you are those of whom our prophets have spoken—*Frenchmen in disguise, who would come, and by small gifts and pleasant insinuating manners, go about everywhere, examine the state of the country; leave in the end to report at home, and finally return with a multitude of other Frenchmen, to conquer the land and kill us all.*

[2] Vol. ii. p. 362. Lenormant says he has seen this at Aleppo.

[3] *Dillmann*, p. 442.

[4] *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. pp. 114–117.

[5] Born A.D. 1020; died A.D. 1106.

with water, which was made susceptible of prophetic inspiration by ceremonies and incantations used over it. This inspiration or divine force comes from the earth and has only a partial action. When it enters the water it makes a sound which the diviners cannot interpret, but, when it spreads through the contents of the bowl, other confused sounds are heard, from which the knowledge of the future is drawn. This force, or breath, derived from the material world, has always an uncertain or obscure character, as if sent on purpose to help the diviners, by making it impossible at any time to convict them of deception."[1]

Delivered, by Joseph's self-disclosure to them, from their fear of slavery as the punishment for the apparent theft of the divining bowl, the future removal of his brethren with their father to Egypt is speedily arranged. Judah's offer to remain as a slave in place of Benjamin, the seeming offender, and the touching pathos with which he tells the story of Jacob's agony of soul for fear of this last remembrance of Rachel vanishing from him as Joseph had done, had shown that they are loyal to his brother, and overpowered him by tender recollections. Egyptian baggage and transport waggons are at their service, and they need not be anxious about bringing all their household stuff, for the good of all the land of Egypt is theirs. In Eastern fashion, they are dismissed with gifts of costly clothing[2] to wear on high days and great occasions;[3] the ten receiving each a suit, but Benjamin, his mother's son, five, with three hundred

[1] Quoted by Lenormant, *La Divination*, p. 80. Ephrem Syrus. *Opera omnia*, (Rome, 1737,) vol. i. p. 100.

[2] Not "changes of clothing," but lit. "clothes to change," *i.e.*, to wear on grand days, instead of their common ones.

[3] Gen. xxvii. 15. Judges xiv. 12, 19. 2 Kings v. 22.

shekels of silver besides. "Ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat," for the use of his father on the way, complete the present. The representation on the walls of the tombs of Beni Hassan, of the presentation of the Amu, or Semitic strangers, to a high officer of Pharaoh, described on an earlier page, may help to bring before the mind, the appearance of the Hebrew immigrants.[1]

Once more, then, in the Providence of God, the face of the chosen people is turned to the Nile; this time to find there a kindly shelter in which to grow strong enough to return, centuries later, not as a tribe, but as a nation. Slowly driving their flocks before them, Jacob and his encampment, numbering about seventy souls[2] connected with him by blood, but also a great multitude of slaves and dependents destined to be ultimately merged in the community, passed over the uplands of the South to Beersheba, the home and sanctuary of his fathers. There, as was fitting at such a time, sacrifices are offered to "El," the God of Isaac, and a vision of the night removes any remaining fear respecting the leaving Canaan. The days of his long sorrow for his lost son are at last over, and he can look forward to having his eyes closed by him, when his life is ended.[3]

Goshen,[4] the district on the north-east of Egypt, at last reached, Joseph sets forth in his chariot, with due retinue, to "go up" from the lower lying Memphis, to

[1] Page 360. See also Birch, *Egypt from the Monuments*, pp. 65–67.

[2] Seventy-five in the Septuagint, counting in five descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh. Exod. i. 5. Num. xxvi. 28–37. Deut. x. 22 (Sept.). Acts vii. 14.

[3] Arabs still go to Egypt, in bad years, to live till better times come. Hitzig, *Geschichte*, p. 56.

[4] Goshen is derived by Hitzig from the Persian, Gauzen—a cow. *Geschichte*, etc., p. 60

see his father's face once more. "And Joseph presented himself unto him; and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck much and long,[1] and Israel said unto Joseph, Now, let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive."

By dexterous arrangement, permission is soon obtained from Pharaoh that the new comers should settle in the land of Goshen, as a district suited for pasture; and where they would be apart from the Egyptians, by whom foreign shepherd tribes were greatly disliked, at least while they remained nomadic; though native shepherds were numerous in the Nile valley. Indeed, Egypt abounded in cattle and flocks,[2] and Pharaoh himself had herds;[3] the monuments showing multitudes of asses, cattle, sheep and goats, both royal and of private ownership. Woollen clothing was doubtless forbidden to be worn on visits to the temples, or by the priests, or for the wrappings of the dead; mutton was prohibited to both kings and priests, only beef, veal and geese being allowed to be eaten by them; and goats and sheep could be offered as sacrifices only in a few districts.[4] Yet mutton was eaten in some parts, and the Egyptian shepherd caste lived freely among the people; swineherds only seeming to have been especially despised. The hatred of foreign free shepherd tribes had doubtless been intensified by the domination of the Shepherd Kings, and even under one of them, as the Pharaoh of Joseph may be supposed to have been, local customs and prejudices could not be treated so lightly as to permit actual nomades, such as those of Jacob's encampment, to enter the cultivated districts. The Pharaoh himself, however, we are told, was pleased to find among them

[1] Literally.
[2] Gen. xlvii. 17.
[3] Gen. xlvii. 6.
[4] *Herod.*, ii. 42, 46.

men accustomed to cattle, and chose from them chief herdsmen for his own stock. How vast that must have been, we can imagine from the bounty of Rameses III. to the temples, which amounted in the single instance of that of Thebes to no fewer than 91,223 cattle of different kinds, and in that of Heliopolis, to an additional 45,540.[1]

The interview of Jacob with the mighty Pharaoh is no less artless in its pathos than other parts of the narrative. It is natural to ask an old man his age, and as natural that the answer should be a comment on the life so nearly over. And so it was with the king. With touching dignity and simplicity Jacob speaks as one at the end of his career. In comparison with the lives of his fathers, its one hundred and thirty years had been short; for Abraham had lived one hundred and seventy-five years, and Isaac one hundred and eighty; and it had been "evil," for he thinks of the long and hard service he had had with Laban, and the troubles he had had in his household—the loss of Rachel and of Joseph, among others. It had indeed been a "pilgrimage," for life is that in any case, but still more truly in his—the dweller in tents, wandering hither and thither with his flocks, through all the past, and now in his last days entering a third land as his home. Appropriately, he leaves the presence of the Pharaoh, after asking for him an old man's blessing.

[1] *Harris Papyrus. Records of the Past*, vol. vi. pp. 36, 38, 47, 59. The history of Menephtah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, offers us a striking analogy to the permission granted Jacob and his sons to settle in Egypt. A Papyrus informs us, that under his reign, Shasu or Semites came to Egypt from Idumea, to pasture their flocks at Pa-thum, or Pithom, in the grazing land belonging to the king, and received permission from the king to establish themselves on it.*

* *The Papyrus Anastasi.*

The last scene of the patriarch's life—his dying blessing on his sons—will be better considered hereafter; but the unwavering faith in the Divine promise of Canaan shines out strongly, in the command that he should be buried beside Abraham and Isaac in the cave at Machpelah. "And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people. And Joseph fell upon his father's face, and wept upon him, and kissed him."

As an adopted Egyptian, Joseph naturally honoured his father by a costly embalming, the greatest desire of any Egyptian heart; from the universal belief that the fate of the soul depended on the preservation of the body. As first Minister of State, and a high dignitary of the priestly caste, he had physicians in his service, for Egypt was rich in them, as a special order of the priesthood. The corpse would be carried to the spacious embalming houses outside the city, and left there forty days in the hands of those set apart to this dismal art. Thirty days more had to pass before the mourning was over,—making seventy in all, only two less than for a king,[1] and then the wish of the dead could be fulfilled, by carrying him to Canaan. The days of mourning had seen Joseph's household abstaining from all amusements and luxuries, the bath, wine, fine dishes or rich clothing: Joseph's beard and hair had been suffered to grow, and he had worn the special mourning dress.[2] If the funeral procession, at least in its starting from Memphis or On, was in other respects like that of a high Egyptian, it may even now be restored in fancy from the pictures on some of the tombs; but idolatrous details are so mixed

[1] *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. p. 374. *Diod.*, i. 72.
[2] *Wilkinson*, vol. ii. p. 374. Ebers' *Durch Gosen*, p. 529.

up with others, that it is impossible to separate such as would seem natural in the case of a servant of the One God, like Jacob. We know, however, from Genesis,[1] that the cavalcade which escorted the body to its last resting place was at once large and illustrious. The courtiers and ministers of state rode in it in their chariots; many of the slaves of Joseph swelled his train; the asses and vehicles of a pastoral tribe bore the "house" of Jacob—the children, only, remaining behind; and the whole cortège was guarded and made more striking by a force of Egyptian horse and charioteers. Having reached the open-air threshing floor known as Atad, "the Cactus" —perhaps from thickets of prickly pear growing round—the bier rested for seven days,[2] while the air resounded with the wailings of the mourners, so characteristic of the East in all ages. Possibly, also, these days saw the funeral games with which, then, as now, Arabs are wont to circle round the grave of a chief.[3] Singularly enough a seven days lamentation for the dead still obtains in the communities east of the Jordan and of Lebanon. It is observed in a black goat-hair tent set up on the threshing floor, which lies usually on the west side of a village, the corpse being laid upon the thresher's

[1] Chap. l. 7.

[2] 1 Sam. xxxi. 13. Judith xvi. 34. Sir. xxii. 12.

[3] This is implied in the old interpretation, as in Rosenmüller and Clericus, of the name Beth Hoglah, given by St. Jerome to the spot. But the identification is very doubtful. The name, moreover, seems derived not from the dances round the bier or grave, but from the much more prosaic fact, that the partridge is very plenty in the neighbourhood—Beth Hoglah seeming really to mean "the place of partridges" (*Riehm*). Riehm thinks it was on the east of Jordan, but Winer and Kneucker think the writer speaks from the direction in which the procession was advancing —towards the Jordan—so that Atad would be on this side of it.

wooden standing place in the middle of the floor.[1] The narrative seems to imply that they came, not by the direct road by El Arish and Beersheba, over which Jacob and Abraham had gone down to Egypt, but by a long circuit round the south of the Dead Sea and through the land of Moab and of Ammon—the track along which his descendants were hereafter to reach Canaan, under Moses and Joshua.[2] But the circuit necessary for such a journey makes it, one would almost think, out of the question, and gives great weight to the idea that Moses, writing on the East side of the Jordan, simply means that Atad was on the other, without stating where. St. Jerome indeed identifies it with a place called Beth Hoglah, near the Jordan, on the west side of the river, but there was another Beth Hoglah in the country of the Philistines, which is much more likely to have been the spot.[3] A play upon another name given by tradition to the scene, wherever it may have been, marks, however, the deep impression made by the incident on the popular mind—for henceforth the locality bore a name which equally meant, according to the pronunciation—"the meadow" or "the lamentation" of the Egyptians. The cave of Machpelah, a few days later, received the new inmate, and there, in all probability, the mummy of Jacob rests still, uncorrupted.

Little more is told us of Joseph except that he bore himself kindly to his brethren after his father's death; that he lived one hundred and ten years and saw Ephraim's grandchildren, and that he took the sons of Machir, the son of Manasseh, into his bosom—fondling and petting them in their infancy: a tender picture of the loving-heartedness of the old man, like that of Homer, when the nurse lays

[1] *Riehm*, art. Atad. [2] *Knobel*, p. 493.
[3] *The Land and The Book*, p. 580.

the new-born Ulysses on the knees of his grandfather Autolycos.[1] True to the end to the promise handed down from his fathers, Joseph disappears from our view leaving a solemn charge to his brethren to carry his bones out of Egypt with them, when God should lead them back to Canaan. The Egyptians were accustomed to place the embalmed bodies of their friends in mummy cases of wood, and lay them up safely in a tomb, or keep them in a special chamber in their own houses. Joseph's mummy remained thus in possession of the Israelites till the Exodus, and was then taken by his descendants to Canaan, as he had made their forefathers swear to do, and laid finally at rest in the piece of ground at Shechem which Jacob had long before bought.[2] There, to this day, his tomb, rightly or wrongly, is pointed out under the shadow of Mount Ebal.[3] "If this is the real tomb," says my late worthy friend, Mr. Mills,—"and there is every reason to believe it is—then, underneath, is the sarcophagus, and even the mummy of Joseph, just as they were when deposited by the conquerors."[4]

[1] *Odyss.*, xix. 401. *See also* Gen. xxx. 3.

[2] Exod. xiii. 19; xxxiii. 19. Josh. xxiv. 32.

[3] *The Land and The Book*, p. 473. Mills (*Nablus*, p. 64) thinks it is the true site. See also *Trans. Soc. Bib. Arch.*, vol. ii. pp. 80–82.

[4] Mills' *Nablus*, p. 66.

INDEX.

Abel, etymology of, 174; legends of death of, 176.
Abraham's idea of God divinely revealed, 23; journey to Canaan, date of, 83; first migration of, 295; a common name in Assyria, 299; contemporary of Sargon I., 304; the subject of heavenly guidance, 311; tradition of persecution of, by Nimrod, 316; call of, 323; posterity of, alone, of Sarah's descendants abandon the nomadic life, 324; pursues Chedorlaomer, 326; marries Keturah, 326; journey from Harran, 327; the friend of God, 330; Mahommedan name of, El Khalil, "the friend," 332; creed of, 335; character of, 337; rears an altar wherever he pitches his tent, 338; child-like faith, 339; unique position of, 339; promise to, 339; at Hebron, 340; promise of heir to, 341; vision of, 342; name of, substituted for Abram, 345; brought before Pharaoh, 360; second residence of, in Canaan, 369; and Lot separate, 370; oak of, 372; rescues Lot, 379; buys a grave, 402-3; death of, 410; character of, 410-11.
Accad, the city of, 273.
Accadian language allied to Turanian, 25; cities, in Abraham's time, 26; civilization, 27; ideas of the heavens, 34.
Accadians, distinguished astronomers B.C. 16th century, 27; country of, 258; laws of, 269.
Adah, etymology of, 180.
Adam, etymology of name, 88; Jewish ideas of, 91; grave of, 92; religious belief of, 93-4; death of, James Montgomery, 104; Assyrian name of, 221.
Admah, meaning of, 377.
African, pure, copper-coloured, 157; the typical, differs from the negro, 239.
Alchemy and chemistry, meaning of, 237.
Alphabet, introduction of, 248.
Altars on top of temples, 309.
Amalekites apparently an Arab race, 351.
Amorites, personal appearance of, 351 *n*; described by Amos, 253; appearance of, 350.
Anamim, the, 245.
Angel, meaning of, 222.
Animal worship in Egypt, 15; Juvenal on, 15.
Animals, gradual disappearance of, 139; tropical remains of, in Arctic regions, 142; marine, same as in drift period, 160.
Antediluvians, age of, 184.
Antipodes, Augustine denies there can be, 36.
Antiquity of man, theories on, 132.
Ape, man's descent from, theory of, 162.
Aphobis, proverbs of, 2.
Arab camp, migration of, description of, by Layard, 368; courtesy, 411 *n*; race, the, 412; ancient description of, 418.
Aram, 261; meaning of word, 262; sons of, 262.
Ararat, meaning of, 208; description of, 209.
Arctic expedition, German, 1869 and 1870, 145; regions, possibility of existence of large mammals in, 142.
Ark, dimensions of, 191; built in Holland, 208; shape of, 207.
Arkites, the, 255.
Armenians and Georgians descended from Gomer, 232.
Arphaxad, 260; meaning of, 294.
Arrow-headed writing, invented by Accadians, 26.
Arts, ancient Chaldean, 301.
Aryan race, 24-5; tribes, descent of, from table-lands of Asia, 149.
Ashkenaz, 232.
Asia, Western, idolatry of, 14; the mother of nations, 270.
Askalon, trade of, 355.
Asses numerous in Egypt, 365; sacrificed to Set, 365.

Asshur, 257.
Assur, the god, 258.
Assyria, ancient limits of, 258.
Assyrian legends, creation of man in, 95; library, 3.
Australia, the oldest land on the globe, 215; all quadrupeds marsupial, 215.

Baal, worship of, carried from Palestine to Egypt, 347.
Babel, Bunsen on confusion of languages, 282; tower of, Assyrian legend of, 278, 283–4; western legends of, 284–5; Jewish, 286–8; Egyptian, 288–90; height of, 290; derivation of word, 291.
Babylon, early kings of, date of, 26; etymology of, 28; invaded by Elamite king, 373; no stone for building in, 273.
Babylonia, antiquity of earliest ruins in, 27.
Babylonian history, date of, 153.
Bara, meaning of word, 18.
Bdellium of Havilah supposed to be pearls, 110.
Belus, temple of, 275; described by Strabo, 276; robbed by Xerxes, 276.
Beni Hassan, picture from tombs of, 361–2.
Benjamin born, 443.
Berosus, chronology of, 86.
Bible, Jewish divisions of, 3; harmony of, throughout, 4; evidence of its Divine origin, 17; is not a series of scientific disclosures, 40.
Birds and quadrupeds, first appearance of, 78.
Birs Nimrud, 274.
Bitumen used for mortar, 275; use of, in building, 298–9.
Black death in 14th century, 145.
Blood not eaten, 225; forbidden by the apostles to be eaten, 225.
Book, oldest extant, 2.
Borsippa, temple of, restored by Nebuchadnezzar, 277.
Bothnia, Gulf of, rise of land in, 144.
Brick, Greek and modern, found in the Delta mud, 152–3.

Cain, etymology of, 173; sign on, 177; city of, Macaulay's description of, 178.
Calvin maintains that the earth is the centre of our system, 38.
Canaan, races of, 238; son of Ham, 249; the language of, 259; peopled by many races, 348.
Canaanite, meaning of, 249, 354.
Caphtorim, the, 247.
Carnival, yearly, Egyptian, 464.
Casluhim, 246.
Cat trained to hunt, 68, 360.
Cattle in Egypt, 364.
Cave men, description of, 376 *n*.
Chaldea, dress in, 301; irrigation of, 303; present fertility of, 303–4; fruit trees of, 303.
Chariots and bows used in war, 351.
Charms and talismans, 310.
Chedorlaomer, 374.
Cherubim, 172.
China, date of historical period in, 149.
Chronology, Biblical, various ideas on, 86–7; Egyptian, in hopeless confusion, 156.
Chronological reckonings, difference in, 84.
Cimbri, the, same as Celts, 230.
Circumcision, signification of, 344, 349.
Cities walled up to heaven, 253.
Civilization, Accadian, 296; Accadian, in Abraham's day, 300; Indian, date of, 154.
Clay tablets of Babylon, 41.
Climate, coal-forming ages, 76; changes of, 210; variations of, 346.
Coal, the period of, 76; beds, length of time to form, 77; mass of vegetable matter required to form, 87.
Coat of many colours, 448.
Cocks and hens offered to Anubis, 366.
Coffins, gilded, Egyptian, 367.
Coined money, first, 438.
Colet, Dean, narrative of creation, 48; on the elements, 49.
Colour, no index of race, 239.
Compass, points of, among Arabs, 242; in middle ages, 242.
Confusion of tongues, possibly gradual, 283.
Connemara, famine in, 1847, changed the physical type, 157.
Copernican theory of universe, earlier discoveries helped to lead to, 41.

Copernicus, theory of the heavens, 41.
Coralline found in Laurentian gneiss, 73.
Corn in mummies and lake dwellings, 168; if not cultivated becomes extinct, 169; antiquity of culture of, 179; plants, characteristics of, 168.
Corpses, caravans of, at Warka, 273.
Cosmas, map of the world by, 112.
Cosmogony of Zoroaster, 42.
Covenant, ratification of, by burning lamp, 341.
Create, meaning of Hebrew word translated create in A. V., 18.
Creation, ancient ideas of, 17; contrast of the Mosaic account of, with others, 17, 21; ancient legends of, 24; Assyrian legends of, 29; how handed down, 29; Accadian account of, 29–36; geological ideas on, in essays and reviews, 42; Zoroaster on, 42; statement of Bible not designed to be scientific, 45; Dr. McCaul's account of, 46; and modern science, Dr. McCaul on, 47; Bunsen on, 49; delivery of, to Hebrews, 59; of world, distinct from that of man, 70; of man, date of, 85; account of, by Cædmon, 97–105; to the Flood, ten generations, 185.
Crimea, corruption of Cymry, 230.
Crown, ancient Egyptian, now at Leyden, 367.
Cush, country of, 238; race of, 270.
Cushite, stem, races sprung from, 240; language, 271.
Cushites belonged to Caucasian race, 239.

Days, six, length of, Hugh Miller on, 43.
Dead, burial of, in Chaldea, 300.
Dead Sea, description of, 386–7.
Dedan, 243,
Deluge, Assyrian traditions of, 190; description of, 192–7; tablets, age of, 192; traditions of among the Cree Indians, 204; paintings of, in Mexico, 204; date of, 206; the extent of, 210; Dr. Halley's theory of, 212; Whiston's ditto, 213; not universal, 214; extent of, 216.
Delta of Euphrates, growth of, 115.
Demons, belief in, in Abraham's day, 310.
Desert, flowers of the, 318.
Dhourra used for bread, 475 *n.*
Diana, temple of, at Ephesus, 134.
Divining bowls, 492-3.
Dogs trained to hunt, 360.
Dreams, importance attached to, by Egyptians, 462–3.
Dress of Egyptians, 359.
Dwellings, earliest Chaldean, 299, 300.
Dye, Tyrian purple, where else found, 234.

Earth, formation of, from nebulous matter, 71; geological view of first state of, 72; shape of, curious ideas concerning, 111; Burnet's theory of, 212; word, meaning of in Scripture, 219.
Earthquakes not unknown, 348.
Eber, etymology of, 264.
Eclipses, first observations of, 298 *n.*
Eden, locality of, 106–109; description of, from the book of Enoch, 107.
Edessa, in Roman times the centre of Christianity, 322.
Egypt, numerous gods of, 15, 16; great wall of, across the isthmus of Suez, 357; in Abraham's day, 359; silver mines of, 366; trade of, with Canaan, 484; spies in, common, 484.
Egyptian ladies, 459; cupbearer and baker, 462; garden, description of, 486; house, furniture of, 487; house, numerous attendants of, 487–8; priests, learning of, 68; towns, names of, sacred and profane, 246; baking, picture of, 466.
Egyptians, of Caucasian race, 244; despised other races, 245; abhorred sea-fish, 247.
Elamites, language of, 257.
Elephant, formerly found in Western Asia, 143.
Elohim, meaning of, 10; etymology of, 11.
Elysium of Egyptians, 471.
Emesa, famous for its temple of the Sun, 328.
Emim, the name, 375 *n.*
Enoch, meaning of, 180; introduced public worship, 183.
Ephraim and Manasseh born, 483.
Erech, the Warka of to-day, 273.

Esau, character of, 419; meeting with Jacob, 435.
Eskimo driven to the Arctic regions by feuds, 165.
Euphrates, etymology of, 108; rise of, 302.
Eve, the Phenician, 42; etymology of the name, 88; taught by Gabriel, 179; Assyrian name of, 221.
Extinct quadrupeds, human bones found with those of, 139.

Fall of man, strange legends of, 119; Assyrian legend of the, 122; Bible account of, and heathen traditions, 126; Greek notions of, compared with the Bible, 128.
Famines in Egypt, 473–4.
Father of the faithful, Abraham as the, 332.
Fauna of Australia, 215.
Fire, origin of, curious middle-age ideas of, 96.
Fish-god in Babylon, 202; worship unknown in India, 201.
Fisheries of the Delta, 248.
Flaming sword, Assyrian legend of, 124-5.
Flood, Deucalion's, 145; Indian tradition of, 202.
Flora of the world could not survive a year's submersion, 216.
Fossils, chronology of, 79.
Four winds, only, known to Egyptians, 469.

Galileo, 38.
Genealogical table in Genesis, correct, 257.
Genesis, meaning of word, 1; authorship of, 2, 8, 9; antiquity of, 2; design of, 3; contents of, 5.
Geography, notions of, in antiquity, 238.
Geological life, development of, 44–46; antiquity of, Agassiz on, 46; St. George Mivart on, 50; Green on, 148.
Gether, locality of, 263.
Giants, antediluvian, 187.
Gibeonites, the, 254.
Gifts to Abraham, 364.
Gihon, different ideas about, 111; etymology of, 114.
Girgashites, 254.
Glacial period, climate of Europe since, 140.
Globe, primitive, covered with water, 48.
God, Mosaic conception of, 20; knowledge of, among Canaanites, 28; worshipped as Jehovah, 183; human attributes ascribed to, 221.
Gods of Egypt, 482.
Gog, 232.
Gomer, sons of, 231.
Gomorrah, 377.
Gopher wood, 223.
Greeks borrowed their alphabet from the Phenicians, 83; expelled from cities on the Euxine, became barbarous, 164.
Greenland, east coast inhabited in 14th century, 145.
Guadalquiver, name, 235.

Ham, nations sprung from, 228; meaning of, 237.
Haman hanged, 352.
Hamath, son of Caanan, 255.
Harran, 322.
Havilah, 114, 241.
Hebrew, the name, origin of, 294; Scriptures, Fichte on, 129.
Hebrews, free constitution of, in earliest ages, 8; seasons of the, 224; ancient peoples related to, 292; original seat of, 293; the descent of, to Egypt, 446.
Hebron, mosque at, over cave of Machpelah, 404.
Herod, the great hunting-ground of, 263.
Herodotus, and Nehemiah contemporary, 5; reckons Egypt as in Asia, 238.
Hieroglyphic alphabet of the Accadians, 268.
High places universal, 223.
Hittites, wars of, against Rameses II., 252, 353.
Hivites, the, 254; 354.
Holland and Low Countries, how formed, 136.
Holy water among Accadians, 310.
Hooghly, changes in borders of, 152.
Horses, when tamed and used, 132; introduction of, to Egypt, 359 *n*.
Houses in Babylonia, 274.
Huleh, the district, 263.

Human race, varities of, no proof of antiquity of man, 156; created by itself, 163; Human sacrifices, Accadian, 309; antiquity of, 394; not sanctioned by God, 400; among the Greeks, 401.
Huronian and Cambrian periods, depth of rocks, 74.
Hymns, religious, Accadian, 306.

Icebergs, size of some, 211.
Idolatry, Accadian, in Abraham's day, 308; Babylonian, rise of, 304-5; Babylonian, 307; Egyptian, 15.
Immortality, belief of, in the race of Seth, 184.
Inundation, depth of, in Egypt, 471.
Irad, etymology of, 180.
Isaac, sacrifice of, when offered, 398-9; and his sons, 412; character of, 414; burial of, 444.
Ishmael born, 383; and Hagar sent away, 385; from, tribes sprung, 412; and Hagar, dismissal of, 414; character of, 415-6; age when Abraham died, 416.
Ishmaelites, the, spread from the Red Sea to the Euphrates, 417.
Ishtar, tower-temple of, ruins of, 320.
Israel sprung from Shem, 228.

Jacob, character of, 418, 420; angel wrestling with, 421; secures the birthright, 424; dream at Bethel, 425; double marriage of, 430; flight to Canaan, 432; at Mahanaim, 435; name changed to Israel, 435; and Esau meet, 437; well of, 439 and *n*; at Bethel, 442; descent of, to Egypt, 494; buried at Machpelah, 497; body embalmed, 497; body taken to Canaan, 497.
Japheth, descendants of, 256.
Javan, 233.
Jean Paul, on Bible account of creation, 12.
Jebus, meaning of, 252.
Jebusites, the, 252-3.
Jewish civilization, peculiarities of, 12; mind, the, and religion, 13; ideas of creation, 56-59.
Jews 400 years in Egypt, 52; of East, black, 156; intermarriage with Canaanites forbidden, 254.
Job, land of, locality of, 262.
Jordan, description of, 389.
Joseph, birth of, 431; sold, 449; story of, 448; prison, picture of, 461; interprets Pharaoh's dream, 477; a new name given to, 478; marries Asenath, 480; brought to Egypt, 481; divining bowl of, 490-1; at Goshen, 495; body carried to Canaan, 500; age of, 500; tomb, 500.
Jubal, 181; etymology of, 181.

Keturah, 410.
Kings ruled by the priests, 465.
Kiriath Sepher, or Book-town, 350.
Kittim, or Chittim, 236.

Lake formed in China in 14th century, 146.
Lamech, 180, 182.
Land, rise of, recent, in South America, 217.
Language of ancient Chaldea, 300 *n*; original unity of, 281 *n*. 2, 282; as evidence of human antiquity, 154; the rise of new forms of, 155.
Languages, Turanian, 25; Semitic, 25; derived from Latin, 282; corruption of, 154.
Latin, languages derived from, 155.
Laurentian rocks, life discovered in, 44.
Legend, Assyrian, of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, 392.
Lehabim, the Libyans, 245-6.
Leprosy, plague, and famine, 348.
Liberty, Bible idea of, 8.
Libraries, Accadian, 296.
Life, animal, geological arrangement of, 78; for life, 226; the sanctity of, 226.
Light on the fourth day, Godet and Umbreit on, 43.
Limestone, formation of, 80.
Linen, Egyptian, 477-8.
Lion trained to hunt, 68.
Locusts, visitations of, 348.
Lot taken prisoner, 375.
Lud, 261.

Machpelah, cave of, 403.
Madai, the, 233.
Magog, 232.
Magyars of Hungary originally Tartars, 157; and Finns related, 269.
Mahanaim, 435.

Mammalia on banks of Dead Sea, 388.
Mammals of Europe and N. America first known, 50, 51.
Man, Bible doctrine of his dignity, 6, 15; alone erect, looking upwards, 69; stature of, rabbis' ideas of, 89; original beauty of, traditions of, 90; first had wings, according to Tibetan legend, 119; descent of, from animals, 132; antiquity of, in Europe, 141; pre-glacial, 149; etymology of, 222.
Mankind, Egyptian division of, 289.
Man's descent, Darwin's theory of, 159.
Map of heaven and earth, by Cosmas, 113.
Maps, effects of use of compass on, 242.
Marriage, intertribal, desired by patriarchs, 405, 423; settlements in the East, 408; laws in Egypt, 458.
Mehujael, etymology of, 180.
Melchizedek, 381; the first called priest in Scripture, 383.
Men, equality of all, before God, 8.
Menes, date of reign of, 150.
Merodach, temple of, 274.
Mesopotamia, earliest inhabitants of, 268.
Metals, notions about discovery of, 97; discovery of, 135.
Methusael, etymology of, 180.
Methuselah, age of, 184.
Migration, the, of Abraham, 312.
Milk offered to Orisis, 365.
Mines, of Midian worked by stone tools, 138; Tarshish, 235; of Sinai, 367.
Miocene period, climate during, 140; climate of Spitzbergen during, 140; causes of greater heat during, 140.
Mississippi, changes in, 152.
Mizraim, the name, 229; race of, 238; Upper and Lower Egypt, 244; second son of Ham, 244; races traced to, 245.
Monotheism among the Jews, 13; outside the Bible, 17; fidelity of Hebrews to, 22; Semitic peoples not all faithful to, 22; origin of knowledge of, among the Jews, 23; Abraham's, 336.
Moon, worship of, 299; hymn to, 306.
Moreh, meanings of the word, 356.
Moses proclaims war on Amalek, 352.
Mountains, chain of, disappears, 146; in Pliocene age, 217.
Mourning, Egyptian, 497.
Mugheir, remains of, 296.
Müller, Max, quoted, 22.

Nahor, town of, 316; dwellings at, the same as on Assyrian slabs, 318.
Naphtuchim and Pathrusim, 246.
National history, first glimpses of, 267.
Nations, lapse into lower culture, 165; table of, Gen. x., 229; table of, 244; descended from Ham, 256.
Nature, Aryan conception of, 14; primitive conceptions of, 16; worship instinctive in simple races, 17; Jewish ideas of, 52; a revelation of God, 39; Accadian ideas of, 54; convulsions of, before the Black Death, 145.
Negro changed by climate, 157.
Nehemiah, date of, 5.
Niagara, worship of, by an Indian, 17.
Nicholson, Prof. Alleyne, table of geological life, 49.
Night in Palestine, why cold, 432.
Nile, rise and subsidence of, 472 *n.*
Nimrod, 243; etymology of, 272; name, greatness of, 272; empire of, siege of, 279; a mighty hunter, 280.
Nineveh, 258.
Noah, sacrifice of, 224; curses Ham, 227.
Normans adopted French language, 239.
North, the left, among Arabs, 242; Cape, rise of land, 144.

Observatory, Accadian, 298.
Oorfa, importance of, in Abraham's time, 317; climate of, 317.
Ophir, in South Arabia, 236.
Osiris and Isis, worship of, 470.

Padan Aram, priests of, in Abraham's day, 322.
Palace, Egyptian, 489.
Palestine, the El Dorado of Arab races, 324; fruitfulness of, 346; the centre of the ancient world, 346; ancient productions of, 347; original inhabitants of, 349.

Palm, the, various uses of, 304.
Palms, petrified, at Dead Sea, 388 *n*.
Papyrus, found now only south of Nubia, 248.
Paradise, site of, unknown, 223; residences of Persian kings called, 115.
Parents, first, tradition of knowledge of, 91.
Pathrusim, 246.
Patriarchs exercised the power of life and death, 433.
Peleg's settlement, locality of, 264.
Pentateuch, meaning of word, 8.
People, the, recognised in Genesis, 6; not recognised in antiquity, 7.
Perizzites, 353.
Persia, before Cyrus, 257.
Personality, definition of, 20.
Petroleum, probable animal origin of, 80.
Pharaoh, takes Sarah into his harem, 363; meaning of, 363 *n*; court of, 452; birthday of, festivity, 468; dreams of, 468–9; the, must be a priest, 476; of Joseph's time, one of the Shepherd Kings, 480; cattle of, 496.
Phenician, tradition of first city, 186; farmers, 248; weaving of, 249; race, descent of, from Ham, 250; original seat of race, 271.
Philistines, origin of the, 247; allied to Phenicians, 355; warlike, 356 *n*.
Phut, race of, 238.
Physical science, ideas of, 2nd century B.C., 54.
Pigeons, all varieties traced to stock-dove, 158.
Pilgrim Fathers, ancient, 330.
Pison, the broad-flowing, 114.
Plants first appear, 75; sweet-smelling, first appearance of, 130; present Alpine, same as drift flora, 160.
Poles, the, theories respecting temperature of, 141.
Polygamy begins, 180; permitted to Israel, 180.
Potiphar, the name, 452.
Priests attached to the palace, 472.
Printing almost discovered in antiquity, 41.
Prometheus brings fire to man, 126.
Punt, meaning of, 249; people of, 249.
Pyramid, Great, size of, shows early civilization, 167.
Pyramids ancient in Abraham's day, 358.

Rabbinical year in use among the Jews, 83.
Race, human, unity of, 230; change in the outward appearance of, 157.
Rachel, meets Jacob, 428; death of, 442–3.
Rainbow, as a Divine sign, 198; as a sign, 226; heathen allusions to, 226; Scandinavian legend concerning, 227.
Rain-drops, ancient, on sea beach, 82.
Rebekah, mission to Mesopotamia for, 406; betrothal of, 409; character of, 413; nurse of, Deborah, dies, 442.
Refaim, 250.
Reindeer, in France, 139; present range of, 140.
Religion of the Amorites, 351.
Representations of God forbidden, 223.
Resurrection of the dead held by Accadians, 310.
Rhinoceros, body of, found in Siberia, 142.
Riphates mountains, 232.
Rivers, Jewish ideas of, 58; beds of, shifting of, 134; cut through beds of basalt, 235.
Rocks, conglomerate, formation of, 77; wearing away of, 79.
Rodanim, the island of Rhodes, 237.
Rosh, the modern Russians, 233.
Running footmen, Egyptian, 451.
Russia, possible rise of land, 144.

Sabtah, 241.
Sacrifice, idea in, 400.
Salah, etymology of, 264.
Salt, trade in, 247; mountain of, at Gebel Usdum, 387; taking with Arabs, a pledge of friendship, 434.
Sandstone, Old Red, denudations of, in Scotland, 81.
Sanscrit, languages derived from, 154.
Sarah and Sarai, meaning of words, 328; substituted for Sarai, 345; dies, 401.
Sargon I., 28; date of reign of, 305; reign of, 312.
Saturn, theory of formation of, 71.
Science and Scripture, relations of, 39.

Scientific errors made to support Bible interpretation, *n*, 37–38; discoveries gradual, 41.
Scribe, figure of, in Louvre, 245.
Scripture, accuracy of, 247.
Scythians, the most ancient of men, 267; what peoples descended from, 267.
Seal, royal, ancient Chaldean, 301.
Seba, men of, 240.
Semitic, nations, some heathen, 22; language, antiquity of, 25; race, first appearance in Babylonia, date of, 27; meaning of term, 293.
Septuagint, date of, 1.
Serapis Temple, near Naples, shows rise and fall of land, 162.
Serpent, traditions of Zoroaster of, 118; crushing the head of, traditions of, 119; on Roman sculptures, 120; on Babylonian cylinder, 121.
Seth, etymology of, 182.
Seventh day, Accadians honoured, 309.
Sheba, Queen of, 241; home of the Sabæans, 241.
Shechem, Abraham at, 329.
Sheep, different breeds of, from same stock, 158.
Shells raised above the sea level, 217.
Shem, descendants of, 229.
Shepherds' refuge tower, picture of, 444.
Skulls, oldest found, show no trace of inferiority, 160.
Silver, the only coin till David, 438 *n*.
Sippara, Book-town, 321.
Sites of cities of the plain, 386.
Six days, Hugh Miller on, 43; work of the, Reusch on the, 43.
Slaves, price of Egyptian, 450.
Sodom, 377.
Sodom and Gomorrah, destruction of, 393.
Son=descendant, 189.
Sons of God, 188; Bible use of word, 229.
Soul, immortality of, 310.
South called by Arabs the right, 242.
Species, no forms to indicate fusion of, 161.
Spices, great trade in, with Egypt, 450.
Spirits, evil, supposed to lie in wait for men, 186.
Spitzbergen, forests of, in geological times, 140.
Stalagmite, rate of deposit of, 133; copper plates found in, 133; thirty feet thick, 133.
State police, Egyptian, their duties, 453.
Stone age, age of, 134; lateness of, in Italy, 136;
Stone tools, on bas reliefs in Egypt, 138; implements, how old, 132; no test of antiquity of man, 164; knives and weapons, Arab, 139; weapons found in Holland, 135; weapons, 136.
Subsidence of land in Indian Ocean, 218.
Sun, gates for his rising and setting, Accadian idea of, 34; the, the centre of our system (?), 38; dials, Accadian, 301.

Tablets, Chaldean, concerning Deluge, 190.
Tarshish, a port in Spain, 235; famous for corn, 235; ships of, 236.
Task masters and overseers, Egyptian, 455.
Tatooing the sign of God on the brow, 344.
Taxes in Turkey, Egypt, etc., 483 *n*.
Temple, Accadian, at Ur, 298.
Terah, family of, meaning of names of, 294; idolatry of, tradition respecting, 313.
Teraphim, Laban's, 433, 441.
Terra del Fuego, 166.
Testament, Old, object of, 7.
Thorns and thistles, 129.
Tiberias destroyed by earthquake in 1837, 392.
Tibet, mining in, 268.
Tigers, Bengal, found very far north, 143.
Tigris, meaning of word, 108.
Titles of the king's officials, 454.
Tombs, Accadian, 269.
Tongues, confusion of, 280.
Towers, sacred, Accadian, 298–9.
Tree of life, traditions of, 116; of knowledge, Assyrian and Babylonian legends of, 117; of life, Aryans thought it the Soma tree, 117; of life, 172.
Trees in Senegal, great age of, 214; in Mexico, great age of, 214; destruction of, made south of Palestine desert, 377.

Tribes, migrations of Asiatic, 270.
Tripoli, polishing stone, 79.
Tubal-Cain, etymology of, 181.
Turkomans, cradle of, 268.
Turks differ from their Tartar origin, 157.
Turanian race, relations of, 260.
Type, physical, permanence of, 228.
Types different, of mankind, 267.

Universe, origin of the, Bible theory of the, 18, 19; Indian theory of, 21.
Ur, ancient description of, 297; fertility of, 302; formerly on the sea-coast, 302; climate of, 302; means light, 320.

Vedas stolen from Brahma, 201.
Veddas of Ceylon descended from civilized Aryans, 164.
Vertebrata, appearance of, 75.
Volga and Oural run inland, 219.

Wall, Great, of Egypt, 244.
Warka the Necropolis of the Babylonians, 273.
Wars of conquest first mentioned, 272.
Washing the feet, 411.
Weaning feasts, 385; age of, 385.
Wells of Rebecca, 318; women at Eastern, 319; Jacob's strife about, 422.
Winds, Jewish idea of storehouse of the, 55.
Wine-press, Egyptian, 463–4; given to the Egyptian temples, 465.
Witchcraft, 192.
Woman, etymology of, 222; in Egypt, honoured, 456–7.
World, mediæval ideas of form of, 52–3; chart of, first, 53; Accadian ideas of, 53; Jewish ideas of, 55; map of, first, 53; first Jewish ideas of size of, 53; age of, Greek and Indian ideas of, 116; as known to Ancient Hebrews, 242; Hebrew conception of the size of, 266.
Writing, was it known before the Deluge, 29; Accadian, source of Assyrian, 258.

Xerxes, ideas of nature as a living being, 17.

Zemarites, the, 255.
Zillah, etymology of, 181.
Zoar, 377.
Zodiac, hieroglyphic figures on Egyptian, 147.

TEXTS ILLUSTRATED.

GENESIS. PAGE

i. 2 24
„ 7... 498
ii. 3 238
iv. 7 186
„ 14 223
„ 15 226
„ 18 11
vi. 4 188
„ 14 223
x. 10 ... ... 25, 272
„ 7 238
„ 22 ... ... 255, 293
„ 25 ... ... 294, 416
xi. 3 275
„ 4 290
„ 7 28
„ 26 326
„ 28, 31 295
xii. 2–4 339
„ 6 ... ... 338, 398
„ 16 364
„ 20 366
xiii. 1–12 390
„ 18 338
xiv. 5–7... 253
„ 13 ... ... 253, 294
„ 18–20 ... 28, 331
„ 22 382
xv. 2 340
„ 17 466
xvi. 12 416
xvii. 1 280
„ 17 401
xviii. 2–8 25, 34, 329
„ 6, 7 328
„ 19 ... ... 331, 447
xx. 4 28
xxi. 22–32 331
xxii. 22–24 323
xxiii. 4 ... ... 252, 400
„ 15 219
„ 17 418
„ 18 402
„ 26, 34 353
„ 40 280
xxiv. 10... 316
„ 16 415
„ 23 401
xxv. 3 243

PAGE

xxv. 18 ... ... 417, 418
„ 20 401
„ 25... 438
„ 34... 329
xxvii. 15 493
„ 27, 28 424
„ 46 353
xxviii. 22 383
xxix. 17, 27 430
xxx. 1 383
„ 3 500
„ 27... 431
xxxi. 33... 432
„ 50... 433
„ 54... 434
xxxii. 11 435
xxxiii. 13 ... 438, 443
„ 18, 20 ... 437
xxxiv. 11 408
„ 14 447
xxxv. 3 425
„ 8 420
„ 20 401
xxxvi. 5... 333
xxxvii. 7 ... 422, 444
„ 21 439
„ 27 491
„ 35 431
xxxviii. 2–6 229
„ 24 433
xli. 40 477
xliii. 22... 439
xliv. 5, 15 491
xlv. 8 480
xlvii. 6 495
„ 17, 18 ... 359, 495
„ 21 483
„ 29 406
xlviii. 7 420
„ 15 280
„ 22 253, 437, 440

EXODUS.

i. 5... 494
iii. 18 52
ix. 3 359
xii. 29 449
xiii. 19 500
xvii. 16 352

PAGE

xx. 5 227
„ 18 342
xxiii. 10 219
xxiv. 7 59
xxvii. 7–15 229
xxxiii. 19 500
xxxiv. 21 224

LEVITICUS.

ix. 11 429
xvii. 11 225
xviii. 18... 429
xix. 27 343
xx. 17 429
xxvii. 5... 451
„ 30 383

NUMBERS.

xiii. 29 252
„ 30, 33 253
xxi. 17 422
xxiv. 24... 264
xxvi. 28–37 494
xxvii. 2, 3, 4 ... 430
xxxi. 31... 383

DEUTERONOMY.

i. 28 281
ii. 10–20 188
iii. 11 188
vi. 11 449
vii. 7 324
x. 22 494
xi. 30 ... ... 356, 398
xvii. 16 359
xxvii. 22 429
xxxii. 49 417

JOSHUA.

ii. 22 352
vii. 8 448
viii. 1 219
„ 30, 35 440
„ 31 9
xi. 3 252
xii. 9–24 354
„ 16 426
xiii. 5 254
„ 26, 30 435
xvii. 15 350

PAGE

xviii. 16... 350
xix. 28 254
xxiv. 2 308
„ 15 351
„ 32... ... 437, 500

JUDGES.

i. 26 353
„ 36 253
iii. 3 254
„ 8 238
iv. 4 342
v. 21 348
vii. 1 398
ix. 37 441
xiv. 12, 19 493

1 SAMUEL.

i. 24 385
ii. 25 189
xv. 7
xxxi. 13... 498

2 SAMUEL.

ii. 8 435
viii. 11 383
„ 18 383
xiii. 18 448
xvii. 24–27 435
xx. 7 356
xxi. 16–22 352

1 KINGS.

ii. 2 9
iv. 5 383
„ 14 435
„ 21 343
viii. 65 343
ix. 20 ... ... 252, 254
„ 21 254
„ 28 236
„ 30 254
x. 22 236
xx. 49 236
xxi. 26 351
xxii. 48 etc. 229

2 KINGS.

ii. 23 477
v. 22 493
xiv. 6 9
xvii. 24 321
xviii. 34 321
xix. 37 209
xxiii. 10... 390

1 CHRONICLES. PAGE

ii. 34 340
xv. 18, 20 293
xvi. 5 293
xviii. 17 383
xxvi. 27... 383

2 CHRONICLES.

iii. 1 398
ix. 21 236
xx. 7 ... ... 331, 338
„ 36, 37 236
xxiii. 18 9
xxiv. 10 449
xxv. 4 9
xxviii. 3 390
xxxiii. 6 390
xxxiv. 14 9

EZRA.

iii. 2 9
vii. 6 9
ix. 1 252
„ 11 9

NEHEMIAH.

viii. 1 9
ix. 25 449

JOB.

ix. 8 443
x. 22 443
xii. 7–10 67
xxiv. 5–8 349
xxvi. 10 62
xxx. 1–10 349
xxxviii. 19 62

PSALMS.

xi. 22, 29 219
xix. 4–6... 38
„ 14 280
xxv. 27 66
xxxvii. 9 219
lxxii. 15 243
lxxiv. 17 224
lxxxii. 1... 189
xciii. 1 38
civ. 2 38
„ 5 38
„ 10–12 66
cxvi. 9 280
cxxxix. 5 89

PROVERBS.

ii. 21 219
x. 30 219
xx. 4 224

ECCLESIASTES. PAGE

i. 5 38

ISAIAH.

i. 2 189
iii. 20, 21 240
xiv. 14 240
xvii. 5 350
xviii. 4–6 224
„ 27 240
xxiii. 1–12 236
„ 1, 14 236
xxiv. 22... 449
xxix. 22... 316
xxxvi. 19 321
xxxvii. 13 321
„ 38 209
xl. 22 61
xli. 8 338
„ 8 331
xliii. 6 189
xliv. 5 344
xlv. 14 240
lx. 6 243

JEREMIAH.

ii. 10 236
iii. 14, 19 189
viii. 20 224
xiii. 23 240
xxxvi. 22 224
xxxvii. 16 449
xxxviii. 6 449
xlvi. 9 249
xlix. 8 243

EZEKIEL.

xxvii. 7 234
„ 10 249
„ 13 233
„ 14 232
xxix. 10... 239
xxx. 5 249
xxxii. 30 243
xxxviii. 2-6 231
„ 2 232
„ 6 232
„ 15 233
xxxix. 1 232
„ 3 233

DANIEL.

xi. 11–13 9

HOSEA.

ii. 13 441
xii. 4, 5 436

JOEL. PAGE

i. 2 ... ... 219, 348

AMOS.

i. 1 348
ii. 9 ... 188, 253, 350
iii. 15 224
iv. 10 348
v. 25 59
viii. 8 348

MICAH.

iv. 8 443

ZECHARIAH.

xiv. 8 224

MALACHI.

ii. 15 189

JUDITH. PAGE

xvi. 34 498

MARK.

xii. 26 9

LUKE.

ii. 22 9
xvi. 29 9
xxiv. 27, 44 9

JOHN.

iv. 5 437

ACTS.

ii. 5 219
vii. 2–4 325
,, 14 494
xiii. 39 9
xv. 20–29 225

ROMANS. PAGE

i. 8 219

COLOSSIANS.

i. 23 219

THESSALONIANS.

xiv. 22 382

HEBREWS.

xi. 19 399

JAMES.

ii. 23 ... ... 331, 338

1 JOHN.

i. 17 9
vii. 23 9